

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
WICHITA FALLS DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff

CIVIL No. 7:25-cv-00055-O

v.

STATE OF TEXAS,

Defendant.

**PROPOSED INTERVENORS' APPENDIX IN SUPPORT OF
(1) EMERGENCY MOTION TO INTERVENE,
(2) EMERGENCY MOTION TO ALTER OR AMEND JUDGMENT UNDER RULE
59 AND/OR FOR RELIEF UNDER RULE 60(b), and
(3) EMERGENCY MOTION FOR STAY OF FINAL JUDGMENT**

Proposed Intervenor Austin Community College ("ACC"), La Unión del Pueblo Entero ("LUPE"), and Oscar Silva ("Silva") file this Appendix in Support of the above-referenced motions.

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3	Cost of Attendance at UTRGV, Univ. of Tex. Rio Grande Valley, (June 20, 2025).	12-17
4	Chloe Sikes and Angela Valenzuela, "Texas Dream Act [House Bill 1403]," Handbook of Texas Online, accessed June 20, 2025. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.	18-22
5	Chelsie Kramer, Texas Dream Act Survives Despite Repeal Efforts, Am. Immigration Council (May 30, 2025).	23-34

6	La Unión del Pueblo Entero, Undocumented Student Guide to Higher Education in Texas (Ex. 6 al-colegio-si-se-puede-guide-56-pages.pdf, n.d.) https://lupenet.org/	35-91
7	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Memorandum from E. Scott Pruitt, Administrator, to Assistant Administrators, Regional Administrators, and Office of General Counsel, Adhering to the Fundamental Principles of Due Process, Rule of Law, and Cooperative Federalism in Consent Decrees and Settlement Agreements (Oct. 16, 2017)	92-99
8	Tex. H.B. 1403, 77th Leg., R.S. (2001). (<i>Texas Dream Act Report</i> , Every Texan (May 2023), https://everytexan.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Texas-Dream-Act-fact-sheet-May2023.pdf).	100-103
9	Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration - Undocumented Students in U.S. Higher Education	104-106
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11	Declaration of Tania Chavez	109-118
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14	The Justice Department, Texas Reach Agreement to End In-State Tuition for Illegal Aliens	130-134
15	Declaration of Oscar Silva	135-138
16	Declaration of Russell Lowery-Hart for ACC	139-143

Dated: June 24, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

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**Pro Hac Vice Application Forthcoming*

**ATTORNEYS FOR PROPOSED
INTERVENORS LA UNIÓN DEL
PUEBLO ENTERO, AUSTIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AND
OSCAR SILVA**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on June 24, 2025, a true and correct copy of the foregoing document was electronically filed via the Court's CM/ECF system which sends notice of electronic filing to all counsel of record.

/s/ Andrés Correa
Andrés Correa

EXHIBIT 1

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
WICHITA FALLS DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff

CIVIL No. 7:25-cv-00055

v.

STATE OF TEXAS,

Defendant.

DECLARATION OF ANDRÉS CORREA

I, Andrés Correa, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I am admitted to practice law in Texas and am a partner with the law firm of Lynn Hurst & Schwegmann, counsel for Proposed Intervenor La Unión del Pueblo Entero, Austin Community College, and Oscar Silva (“Proposed Intervenor”) in the above-captioned litigation. I am over 18 years of age and am fully competent in all respects to make this Declaration.

2. I submit this declaration in support of Proposed Intervenor’s Emergency Motion to Intervene, Emergency Motion to Alter or Amend Judgment Under Rule 59 and/or for Relief Under Rule 60(b), and Emergency Motion for Stay of Final Judgment

3. I testify, under penalty of perjury, that I have personal knowledge based on my role as lead counsel in this case and my involvement in the preparation of the appendix for the aforementioned motions, that the documents referred to as Exhibits 2-14 are true and correct copies of the documents reflected therein.

Dated June 23, 2025

/s/ Andrés Correa
Andrés Correa

EXHIBIT 2

Cutting through the noise to bring you clear-eyed analysis of the latest immigration news and policies.

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Texas Dream Act: Protecting Undocumented Students' Access to Higher Education Is Economic, Educational Imperative

Posted by Chelsie Kramer | Mar 4, 2025 | Immigration

101, Legislation, Reform



The American Immigration Council does not endorse or oppose candidates for elected office. We aim to provide analysis regarding the implications of the election on the U.S. immigration system.

In 2001, Texas set a precedent by enacting House Bill 1403, commonly known as the [Texas Dream Act](#), which grants eligible undocumented students access to in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities. This landmark legislation—the first of its kind in the nation—has enabled countless students to pursue higher education, contributing significantly to the state’s economy and cultural fabric. Over the past two decades, [25 states](#) have followed Texas’ example, recognizing the economic and social benefits of broadening access to higher education.

However, recent developments, such as the 10 bills filed in Texas—[HB 160](#), [HB 232](#), [HB](#)

424, HB 978, HB 979, HB 1324, HB 1815, HB 2535, SB 1798, SB 1205—and Florida’s repeal of a similar law, underscore the pressing need to safeguard Texas’ commitment to educational accessibility.

A Pillar of Educational Opportunity

The Texas Dream Act allows undocumented students who meet specific criteria—including graduating from a Texas high school, residency in the state for at least three years, and an affidavit of intent to apply for permanent residency—to qualify for in-state tuition rates.

This policy has been instrumental in making higher education attainable for many students who might otherwise be unable to afford it. Out-of-state tuition rates are typically **three times** higher than in-state rates, presenting a significant financial barrier. As of the most **recent data**, approximately 57,000 undocumented students are enrolled in higher education institutions across Texas. In 2021, a total of **20,137 students**—representing just 1.5% of all college and university enrollments in the state—were using the Texas Dream Act to pursue their education, preparing to become essential contributors to Texas’ workforce.

The Economic Consequences of Repeal

Repealing access to in-state tuition for undocumented students would have severe economic consequences. [Research](#) by the Council indicates that if the Texas Dream Act is repealed, Texas stands to lose more than \$461 million annually in economic activity, including \$244.4 million in lost wages and \$216.9 million in diminished spending power. Such outcomes would not only harm affected students, but also negatively impact higher education institutions, businesses, and communities across the state. Ensuring access to higher education does more than benefit the individual—it reinforces Texas' workforce, tax base, and overall economic competitiveness.

Economic and Social Contributions

Undocumented students bring considerable economic benefits to Texas. In fiscal year 2021 alone, these students paid [\\$81.6 million in tuition and fees](#), directly supporting the state's educational institutions. Beyond tuition, in 2023, [undocumented immigrants in Texas](#) contributed \$5.4 billion in state and local taxes and made up 9% of the state's

workforce, underscoring their role as active participants in the state's economy.

Moreover, research shows that in-state tuition policies lead to significant financial gains, with these students' earning potential increasing by more than 57%. According to Council [research](#), beneficiaries of the Texas Dream Act have earned \$33 billion more than they would have without a college degree, resulting in more than \$28.5 billion in additional economic activity in Texas.

The Imperative to Protect the Texas Dream Act

Despite its longstanding success, the Texas Dream Act has faced multiple repeal attempts since its inception. The persistence of these challenges to in-state tuition—and recent repeals in states like Florida—indicate that the Act's future cannot be taken for granted. Advocates must remain proactive, emphasizing the Act's benefits and mobilizing support to counteract potential threats.

Opponents argue that the policy lacks enforcement mechanisms to ensure students pursue legal status, but this critique fails to acknowledge the law's broader economic and educational benefits. Business leaders, including organizations

from across the state, have long expressed their support for maintaining in-state tuition access.

In 2019, Texans for Economic Growth, a business coalition housed by the American Immigration Council, introduced the [Texas Compact on Immigration](#), emphasizing support for in-state tuition. The compact affirms: “Texas has a long and proud tradition of embracing immigrants and leading the country in bipartisan, common-sense immigration policies. We urge state leaders to protect tuition equity and continue offering in-state tuition to all Texas high school graduates who seek higher education and wish to contribute their talents to our vibrant economy.”

Initially launched with 50 members, the coalition has since expanded to over 160 business leaders and organizations, recognizing immigrants as vital to Texas’s continued success.

The Path Forward

By protecting this commitment, Texas policymakers not only honor the aspirations of countless students but also ensure the continued economic and social vitality of Texas.

Texas has long been a leader in policies that bolster economic growth and workforce development. Preserving in-state tuition access ensures Texas remains an attractive place to live, work, and do business. The path forward is clear: safeguarding educational opportunities for all Texas students is not just a moral imperative but an economic necessity.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Chelsie Kramer

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EXHIBIT 3



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Cost of attendance

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The cost of attendance (COA) is an estimate of what it costs the typical student to attend The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. COA includes estimated tuition and fees and the average cost of basic living expenses such as, housing, food, books, course materials, supplies, equipment, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses, for one full academic year (Fall & Spring terms). When comparing financial aid packages from other schools, make sure you are comparing the total cost of attending that school, not just the total financial aid offered.

Your COA is also used to create your financial aid package. Small changes to this estimate may or may not result in adjustments to aid depending on Federal/State policies and regulations. UTRGV and other resources may provide financial aid up to your total COA but will not provide financial aid exceeding that amount.

Definition of Terms

Summer Awards Transfer
Request

Additional Aid Request

Applications Deadlines

Financial Aid Adjustment

Grants

Tuition & Fees – The average cost of tuition and fees for a typical undergraduate student based on enrolling for 15 hours per semester for the fall and spring semester; or the average cost of tuition and fees for a typical graduate student based on enrolling for 10 hours per semester for the fall and spring semester. The actual costs that a student incurs will vary depending on the student’s degree program and whether there are additional fees.

Housing & Food – A reasonable estimate of what it would cost to live in the R Grande Valley while attending school. For students living on campus, it is base on average residence hall rates and the largest meal plan available. Actual costs may vary by individual choices related to location and circumstances.

Books, Course Materials, Supplies, and Equipment – The average cost of these materials for a typical full-time student for an entire academic year.

Graduate Resource Grant	Transportation – The transportation allowance includes the cost of travel between the student’s residence and the institution, and travel necessary to complete a course of study. Costs may vary because of the student’s place of permanent residence, or the student’s place of residence while in school.
Eligibility Requirements	UTRGV local RGV students save even more!
Verification	For residents of the Rio Grande Valley, being a commuter student has many benefits. Students that live in the RGV and commute to campus have even greater savings as they do not have to pay room and board expenses for living on campus or off campus. Also, there are many local public transportation options for getting to the UTRGV campus.
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)	
Withdrawing and Return of Funds	For more information go to www.utrgv.edu/transportation
Repeated Coursework	Miscellaneous personal expenses - The allowance for miscellaneous personal expenses includes clothing, laundry and cleaning, personal hygiene and grooming supplies.
Hazlewood Act	Please note: The amounts below for housing, food, books, course materials, supplies, equipment, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses are averages and will vary widely depending on the circumstances and needs of each student (e.g. place of residence, miles driven throughout the academic year, personal expenses, eating in a campus residence hall or cooking for oneself, etc.).
Graduate Resource Grant	
Graduate Resource Grant	For all students who need to travel between the UTRGV campuses, UTRGV offers free regularly scheduled shuttle service. Additionally, the local Metro bus lines allow UTRGV students to ride free.
AmeriCorps	For more information on the Cost of Attendance for the UTRGV School of Medicine, click here .
FINAID FAQ	For Cost of Attendance information for the UTRGV School of Podiatric Medicine, click here .
FAFSA FAQ	

	2024–2025	2023–2024	2022–2023		
Repayment	Undergraduate Cost of Attendance for Full-Time Enrol (Based on enrollment of 15 hours per semester)				
Accelerated Programs		Resident Living With Family	Resident Living On Campus	Resident Living Off Campus	Non-Resident Living With Family
Work-Study					
Work-Study for Students	Tuition & Fees	\$9,986	\$9,986	\$9,986	\$22,286

On-Campus Supervisors		Resident Living With Family	Resident Living On Campus	Resident Living Off Campus	Non-Resident Living With Family	Non-Resident Living On Campus
Off-Campus Work-study Program						
Consumer Information	Housing & Food	\$2,762	\$9,728	\$10,262	\$2,762	\$9,728
Financial Aid for Finish@UT	Books, Course Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250
Hazlewood Act	Transportation	\$2,902	\$1,290	\$2,902	\$2,902	\$1,290
Off-Campus Work-study Program	Miscellaneous	\$2,402	\$2,628	\$2,628	\$2,402	\$2,628
	Total Cost of Attendance	\$19,302	\$24,883	\$27,029	\$31,602	\$31,602
Graduate Cost of Attendance for Full-Time Enrollment (Based on enrollment of 10 hours per semester)						
Hazlewood Act		Resident Living With Family	Resident Living On Campus	Resident Living Off Campus	Non-Resident Living With Family	Non-Resident Living On Campus
Off-Campus Work-study Program						
Affordability	Tuition & Fees	\$9,566	\$9,566	\$9,566	\$17,766	\$17,766
Tuition and Fees	Housing & Food	\$2,762	\$9,728	\$10,262	\$2,762	\$9,728
Fall to Summer Rates	Books, Course Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250
Tuition Estimator	Transportation	\$2,902	\$1,596	\$2,902	\$2,902	\$1,596
Cost of Attendance	Miscellaneous	\$3,362	\$3,362	\$3,362	\$3,362	\$3,362
Payment Methods	Total Cost of Attendance	\$19,842	\$25,502	\$27,342	\$28,042	\$31,602
Why Enroll 15 Hours						

Texas Crews

Veterans Resources

1098-T Announcement

Stay on Track

Texas Residency

└── High School Graduation in
Texas

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Guaranteed Tuition and Q&A

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Senate Bill 18 Reporting

UTRGV Careers

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Web Accessibility

Mental Health Resources

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

EXHIBIT 4

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[\[https://www.legacyoftexas.com/product/texas-almanac-2024-2025\]](https://www.legacyoftexas.com/product/texas-almanac-2024-2025)

Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) <https://www.tshaonline.org>

Texas Dream Act [House Bill 1403]

<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/texas-dream-act-house-bill-1403>

By: Chloe Sikes[\[https://www.tshaonline.org/about/people/chloe-sikes\]](https://www.tshaonline.org/about/people/chloe-sikes) and Angela Valenzuela[\[https://www.tshaonline.org/about/people/angela-valenzuela\]](https://www.tshaonline.org/about/people/angela-valenzuela)

TEXAS DREAM ACT [HOUSE BILL 1403]. House Bill 1403, widely known as the Texas DREAM Act, provides in-state tuition for Texans without legal status. House Bill (HB) 1403, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2001, provides Texans, regardless of legal immigration status, eligibility to be classified as state residents for the purpose of being charged in-state tuition rates at public Texas colleges and universities. Without this eligibility, institutions of higher learning would charge the higher out-of-state or international tuition rates. Texas was the first state in the nation to pass this type of legislation, and approximately twenty states followed with similar bills.

The Seventy-seventh Texas Legislature passed HB 1403 with bipartisan support. Representative Rick Noriega (D–Houston) authored the measure, in collaboration with Domingo García (D–Dallas), Fred Hill (R–Richardson), Elvira Reyna (R–Mesquite), and Ismael Flores (D–Palmview). Leticia Van de Putte (D–San Antonio) sponsored the bill. An additional nineteen co-authors signed the bill. Sixty-three House Republicans voted in favor of it. With an amendment from the Senate, HB 1403 passed with 130 yeas, 2 nays, and 2 abstentions. Governor Rick Perry signed the bill into law on June 16, 2001, and the legislation became effective immediately for persons seeking college enrollment in the fall of 2001.

HB 1403 stipulates that Texas students without legal status must meet certain criteria to be eligible for in-state tuition rates. While in high school, they must be a dependent of a parent or guardian living in Texas; graduate from a Texas high school or obtain a GED certificate; reside in Texas for at least three years prior to graduating from high school; register with a Texas public college or university beginning in the fall of 2001; and file an application to seek permanent residency in the United States.

In the years since the passage of HB 1403, legislators have tried to repeal the law. The growing influence of conservative legislators, including the recent election of a like-minded governor and lieutenant governor, presented formidable challenges to the law in 2015. Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick campaigned against the law, and Governor Greg Abbott said that he would not veto a repeal of the law if passed by the legislature. Groups such as Texans for Immigration Reduction and Enforcement and Tea Party adherents mobilized support for repeal legislation such as the proposed Senate Bill (SB) 1819. On the other hand, the Texas Association of Business [/handbook/entries/texas-association-of-business], religious groups, labor unions, and university groups that included students without legal status, and other allies united in support of HB 1403. Democratic legislators, particularly those associated with the Mexican American Legislative Caucus [/handbook/entries/mexican-american-legislative-caucus], also voiced support for the original legislation.

Conservative members of the Eighty-fourth Texas Legislature introduced SB 1819 that stated that Texas residents “unauthorized to be present in the United States” could not be “considered a resident of this state for the purposes of receiving in-state tuition....” While the bill advanced from committee hearings, it failed to meet the deadline to be heard by the Senate for a vote. Public pressure and political maneuvering managed to defeat the repeal efforts, however, the strong opposition to HB 1403 indicated that the idea of providing in-state tuition to Texans without legal status would remain contentious in the state.

Bibliography:

Stella M. Flores, “The First State Dream Act In-State Resident Tuition and Immigration in Texas,” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 32 (December 2010). *HOUSE JOURNAL, SEVENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION*, May 24, 2001. “In-state tuition for undocumented immigrants debated,” *Interim News*, December 15, 2010, House Research Organization, Texas House of Representatives. Texas Legislature Online: HB 1403

(<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/History.aspx?LegSess=77R&Bill=HB1403>), accessed August 20, 2016. Texas Legislature Online: SB 1819

(<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/BillLookup/history.aspx?LegSess=84R&Bill=SB1819>), accessed August 20, 2016. Alexa Ura, “For Abbott, a Balancing Act of Far Right and Hispanics,” *Texas Tribune*, December 7, 2014 (<https://www.texastribune.org/2014/12/07/abbott-balancing-act-far-right-and-hispanics/>), accessed May 16, 2015.

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Time Periods:

- Texas Post World War II[\[https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/browse/periods/texas-post-world-war-ii\]](https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/browse/periods/texas-post-world-war-ii)

The following, adapted from the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, is the preferred citation for this entry.

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Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

TID (Title Identifier): MLT03

Original Publication Date:
August 23, 2016

EXHIBIT 5

Search



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Texas Dream Act Survives—Because Texans Showed Up

Published: May 30, 2025

Author: Chelsie Kramer

Legislation

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The American Immigration Council does not endorse or oppose candidates for elected office. We aim to provide analysis regarding the implications of the election on the U.S. immigration system.

In a legislative session marked by political division and increasingly polarized rhetoric, the [Texas Dream Act](#) endured. The win affirms that all Texas high school graduates—regardless of immigration status—will continue to have access to higher education.

Despite nine separate bills filed to repeal this landmark 2001 law—including [HB 232](#) and [SB 1798](#)—not a single one passed during the 89th Texas Legislature. SB 1798 made it all the way to the Senate Intent Calendar, signaling just how close Texas came to undoing over two decades of bipartisan progress. But because of tireless



prosperous future.

A Policy That Works

The Texas Dream Act allows undocumented high school graduates to access in-state tuition at public colleges and universities. To qualify, students must have lived in Texas for at least three years, graduated from a Texas high school or earned a GED, and signed an affidavit declaring their intent to apply for legal residency.

It's a pragmatic, homegrown solution that has stood the test of time. Since its passage in 2001, Texas has been a national leader on tuition equity, with 24 other states and D.C. adopting similar policies. This isn't just good policy—it's good economics. In 2021 alone, Texas Dream Act students—known as “affidavit students”—contributed [\\$81.6 million in tuition and fees](#) to Texas public institutions. Repealing the law would cost the state an estimated [\\$461 million annually](#) in lost economic activity.

As one [former affidavit student aptly put it](#):

“Policies like the Texas Dream Act are more than lines of legislation. They're lifelines. They're blueprints for possibility. And if we're willing to see the wholeness in something that's been broken—just like adrienne maree brown says, maybe we can build something better, too.”

Unified Opposition From Texans Who Know What's at Stake



Meanwhile, the public response was overwhelming: [97% of Texans](#) who submitted comments to the House Committee on Higher Education opposed HB 232. One Dallas small business owner captured the stakes well:

“Texas’s greatest asset is its people. When we invest in those who are eager to contribute to our economy, everyone benefits.”

This coordinated engagement made the difference. Legislators across the political spectrum heard from stakeholders who don’t often weigh in on immigration debates—employers, educators, faith voices, and local community leaders. It reminded them that the Dream Act is not a partisan wedge, but a practical investment in Texas’ economic future.

Carrying the Momentum Into the Interim

As we celebrate this victory, we must also stay vigilant. While these repeal efforts failed, they made it further than in years past. And troublingly, even after House deadlines made it clear that SB 1798 was dead, **two additional senators signed on as co-authors on May 26**—a clear signal that this bill may be used as a campaign talking point heading into election season.

That’s disheartening. Turning a well-established, bipartisan education policy into a political wedge undermines the futures of hardworking Texas students who simply want the chance to learn, contribute, and succeed.

This isn’t just about defending policy. It’s about shaping the narrative—and ensuring the story we tell about immigrants is rooted in reality, not rhetoric.



listened, they learned, and they kept their focus where it belonged: on securing a stronger future for our state.

By keeping the Texas Dream Act intact, Texas reaffirmed its role as a national leader—committed to investing in the talent that has long fueled our economic engine. This session reminded us of what’s possible when communities come together, when business leaders speak up, and when our elected officials choose facts over fear and vision over rhetoric.

Students

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EXHIBIT 6



**¡AL COLEGIO
SI SE PUEDE!:
Undocumented Student Guide**



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ABOUT LA UNION DEL PUEBLO ENTERO

Founded by labor rights activists César Chávez & Dolores Huerta, LUPE builds pueblo power by developing community leaders through membership. From fighting deportations, to providing social services and English classes, to organizing for streetlights and drainage, LUPE responds to the needs of the community, and takes action that creates a chance for a better life. LUPE envisions justice and belonging for all - regardless of race, age, gender, and immigration status - so that the pueblo can thrive, live with dignity, and achieve liberation.

(956)787-2233

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PREFACE

When I was seven years old, my family immigrated from Mexico to the United States. I spent 9 years without an immigration status. At 16, I was fortunate to qualify for DACA. Shortly after my college application process began. Early on in the process I realized I was not like most of my classmates. I remember the exact moment I had this realization. My English class was in a computer lab in which a counselor was guiding us through our first college application. Question by question. Step by step. The first couple of questions were easy then we got to THE question; Are you a U.S. citizen? I knew I wasn't but suddenly I panicked and answered "yes". I don't know why exactly. Perhaps I was scared my college privileges would be revoked if I had answered "no". Regardless, that split second decision led me to a bumpier road towards college. From then on I was filled with anxiety and questions like do I qualify for financial aid? What is an affidavit? Do my parents file taxes? The list goes on. My college application process wasn't easy. I made a lot of mistakes and learned more lessons. Nevertheless, I eventually figured everything out on my own time. At LUPE, I am fortunate to utilize these lived experiences to advise undocumented students through their college application process. LUPE's goal with this guide is to facilitate this journey for you in hopes you make little to no mistakes.

As an undocumented student you face unique challenges and uncertainties when it comes to pursuing higher education. Despite these obstacles, it is important to remember that you have the right to access higher education regardless of your immigration status. As we go through this journey together, please keep in mind how far you have come. How far your family has come. You are so resilient and have endless potential. If a small setback should arise throughout this process, do not let it keep you from reaching your goal of attending college. We'll find the solution together. We came to this country to thrive and that is what we're going to do. ***¡Si Se Puede!***

With love, your friend at LUPE

P.S. Give us a call if you need assistance!
(956)787-2233

CHAPTER 1: ¿SI SE PUEDE!



“CAN I GO TO COLLEGE?”

Some of you may have asked yourself this question at some point in your life. Others may already know the answer. Rest assured that **YES, YOU CAN** attend college. In the United States, every state has its own laws regarding undocumented students' ability to attend college. In Texas, everyone has the right to access higher education regardless of immigration status.

THE TEXAS DREAM ACT

In the early 2000s, there was a growth in organizing and advocacy efforts done by undocumented students, known as Dreamers. Dreamers played an important role in raising awareness of the challenges they faced in accessing higher education because of their immigration status. These actions contributed to the development of legislation changes such as the **Texas DREAM Act**.

Since 2001, certain undocumented students have the right to qualify as Texas residents for tuition purposes. This right was granted by the Texas House Bill 1403 and later expanded by the Texas Senate Bill 1528 in 2005. Qualifying as a Texas resident means you will pay in-state tuition at public institutions in Texas & can apply for TASFA.

IF THIS INSPIRES YOU TO TAKE ACTION & CREATE CHANGE, MAKE SURE TO VISIT CHAPTER 7!

FOR MORE INFO ON TASFA GO TO CHAPTER 3!

TO QUALIFY AS A TEXAS RESIDENT, YOU MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING:

- 1** Graduate from a public or private high school, or receive a GED, in Texas;

- 2** Live in Texas for at least the 3 years leading up to high school graduation or receiving a GED;

- 3** Live in Texas for the 12 months leading up to the semester you are enrolling in college; and

- 4** Provide the college or university a notarized affidavit of intent (Appendix A) stating that you will file an application to become a U.S. permanent resident as soon as you are eligible to do so.

Immigrant students who do not meet the requirements above but who have filed an I-30 (family petition) or I-40 (work petition) with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and have received a Notice of Action as a response from the USCIS, are also eligible to receive in-state tuition if they have been here for at least 12 months.

People holding work visas (H-1B) and their dependents (H-4) can now also receive in-state tuition at state universities. The same is true for applicants of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) applicants, among others.

If you do not qualify for any of the above, you can still attend college. However, you will most likely pay out of state tuition. Additionally, you do not qualify for state financial aid making it difficult to pay for school.

REACH OUT TO US AT LUPE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT QUALIFYING!

Okay, so you **CAN** go to college...but where should you go? The following information can help you make that decision. There are different types of schools and degrees available to you. Please take them into consideration when making your decision.

TWO-YEAR & FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Higher education institutions can be categorized into several types based on their academic programs, degrees offered, and institutional focus. Two-year institutions are known as community colleges. Colleges primarily offer associate degrees and certifications. Associate degrees can be non-transfer, meaning they provide the necessary skills for specific jobs, or they can be transfer degrees, which allows you to transfer credits to a four-year institution to complete a bachelor's degree. Four-year institutions, commonly referred to as universities, offer undergraduate programs that generally last four years of full-time study.

VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Vocational and technical (Vo-Tech) schools are privately funded institutions. Vo-Tech schools offer licenses and certificates which can be completed in 6 months to 2 years. It is very important to do your research before applying to a vocational or technical school. Because these institutions are privately funded, some of them double the tuition or don't offer financial aid for undocumented students. If you are interested in a Vo-Tech school, I recommend calling the school to ask what resources they offer to undocumented students, if any.

VISIT CHAPTER 3 FOR MORE INFO ON CREDIT, FULL-TIME STUDY, & TUITION!

PUBLIC & PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Public and private higher education institutions differ in their ownership, funding sources, governance, and overall mission. Public institutions are owned and funded by the government, typically at the state level. They receive a significant amount of their budget from state appropriations and taxpayer funds, resulting in lower tuition rates for in-state students. Private institutions are not owned or operated by the government. Instead, they are funded through fees, endowments, donations, and sometimes religious affiliations. Their tuition tends to be higher than public institutions. You can attend both public and private; however, you have to see what is more convenient for you.

DEGREE TYPES

We've talked about the different types of institutions and the type of degrees they offer. Now let's dig a little deeper into the different types of degrees you can earn.

DEGREE	DESCRIPTION
CERTIFICATION/LICENSE	A program indicating competency in a specific skill or field obtained through courses, exams, or practical assessments. It usually takes months to a couple of years to complete.
ASSOCIATE DEGREE	An undergraduate degree typically obtained from a community or technical college that usually takes 2 years to obtain. An associate degree provides knowledge in a particular area of study that prepares you to enter the workforce upon graduation. It can also serve as a foundation for a bachelor's program.
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	A four-year undergraduate degree earned from a college or university. It offers a comprehensive understanding of your chosen field of study. With a bachelor's degree, you can be well-prepared for many entry-level careers in your chosen field. It is often considered a minimum requirement for many professional roles.
MASTER'S DEGREE	An advanced degree that follows a Bachelor's program and often takes 1-2 years to complete. Most master's programs require a minimum of 30 credits. It offers specialized knowledge in a specific area and can lead to career advancement or specialization within a field.
DOCTORATE DEGREE	A doctorate is the highest level of academic degree you can achieve, typically taking several years to complete beyond a bachelor's or master's degree. With a doctorate you may become an expert in your area of study and pursue careers in academia or advanced professional roles.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A HIGHER EDUCATION FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS: HIGHLIGHTING BENEFITS & CHALLENGES

We all know that college is a powerful tool that can help transform lives and empower individuals. Your journey may not be easy, it rarely is for any college student let alone an undocumented student. You will encounter unique challenges and situations. For this reason a testimonio from an undocumented professional on their journey towards, during, and after college is included below. In hopes that their words help you realize your endless potential, if you haven't already. You can overcome anything & come back stronger than ever, just like the undocu professional below.

ESPERANZA'S TESTIMONIO

REALIZATION OF STATUS

There is always a defining moment for every undocumented student where it dawns on them how different their reality is from that of their peers. For me it happened as a freshman in high school; I was invited to attend a college tour to Texas A&M, which was on the other side of the Falfurrias checkpoint. I remember how excited I was to have been invited, but I also remember the fear in my mothers eyes as I explained the news to

her. My mother immediately called the program and got informed that due to my immigration status, my invitation had been rescinded and I would not be able to attend. During this moment, in the midst of the disappointment and despair I felt, I realized how much weight my immigration status carried and the power it had in defining my future.

JOURNEY TO COLLEGE

The following high school years passed by fairly quickly. Despite that defining moment, I've always had it present that I wanted to get a college education. During the last year of high school, while my peers were applying to universities all over the nation and abroad, I became even more desperate to figure out a way to attend university, any university for that matter. My parents, Mexican immigrants, had done everything in their power to guide me up until this point. I knew that this was a journey

I had to start alone, and whilst it was hard to navigate a system I knew nothing about, I was able to find people along the way that made it a little less scary.

Despite living in a border city, college staff seemed poorly prepared to handle questions and situations from the undocumented student community. I encountered so much misinformation from people that were supposed to guide you through college admissions, financial aid

applications, and standardized tests. I attended workshops at my local college to fill out the ApplyTexas application and they often seemed unsure of how to proceed when I explained my situation. I remember almost making the mistake of applying as an international student, thinking this was the only way. Luckily, my high school counselor caught on to this quickly, and was able to correct my path and shine some light on what the admissions process could look like for an undocumented student like me.

Similarly, the difficulties of the TASFA application were a mystery, and were intimidating for both my parents and me. Back in 2015, the process for filling out the TASFA was more complex and

COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

As an immigrant and first-generation, low-income (FGLI) student, the first year of university is exciting yet terrifying. There's still so many more bumps down the road that you don't really anticipate or know to prepare for and you're filled with questions like "Will financial aid cover all my tuition? How will I pay for books? Are these the right courses I should take in my first semester? How will I commute to campus? How will I do my homework without a laptop?" All this anxiety is understandable, but you have to remind yourself that if you've gotten this far already, there's nothing stopping you.

Seemingly simple tasks like understanding your first tuition bill, and creating your class schedule are complicated and confusing. The whole financial aid process takes a while to reflect on your bill, but if you've submitted every paper and material required from you, rest-assured that TASFA will most likely cover most of your tuition and you might even receive some money to cover other expenses, like access codes. At least this was my experience and I was able to afford my first laptop due to TASFA. In addition, signing up for classes is also something really intense. Reading your degree plan and planning out what classes need to be taken the first two semesters is overwhelming when you are not familiar with the process. My recommendation

tedious, and had to be done on paper- leaving no room for mistakes. Not only did I have to fill out the application, which in itself was stressful, but I also had to get a residency affidavit notarized and my parents had to get their income notarized. For the undocumented community, doing anything that might expose them and potentially reveal their status (e.g. going to the hospital or doctor, getting documents notarized, traffic tickets) is often avoided, so my parents' sole willingness to get their income notarized despite the potential repercussions, was a pure act of love. Ultimately, it was the support of my parents and people close to me that knew about my situation that were able to help me get into college.

would be to find a faculty member from your department early on that can guide you through the courses you need to take. Faculty members are great for guidance and can often refer you to resources that your general counselors cannot!

Once you start though, you start getting the hang of things. You start immersing yourself in your department, and start networking with people with similar interests as you. One of the smartest things you can do during this time as an undocumented student is network with your department and peers. Find a professor that you connect with and that can become your mentor. Join a research lab or an organization that your mentor is involved in. As I mentioned before, faculty from your department often push you and offer you resources and opportunities that otherwise you wouldn't know about. This was how I received numerous scholarships later in my career and how I got to travel to conferences to present my research work- all while undocumented.

During my time in university, I found my peers applying for internships at big companies, something that I couldn't do due to my status. I took this as an opportunity to look at smaller businesses and organizations that could use some help in my area of expertise. I started

interning for non-profit organizations that aligned with my interests and values, and that I knew I could make a difference. For example, I interned with Rise First, an online platform that empowers first-generation, low-income (FGLI) students and professionals, as a web developer. In addition, I joined several organizations related to my career that provided me with volunteering opportunities locally.

JOURNEY AFTER COLLEGE: FINDING JOBS AS AN UNDOCUMENTED PROFESSIONAL

Once I neared the finish line for my bachelors in Computer Science, I had a number of projects and internships I had acquired, but still didn't have a job lined up. Of course, the main obstacle was my status; I knew I couldn't pursue the jobs my fellow peers were. I remember feeling very hopeless and frustrated during this time period as I continued to work as a cashier at a Mexican food restaurant. I spent a year feeling depressed, lost, and I even questioned why I went to university knowing I couldn't work in my field.

One day, I realized that If I was able to get a bachelors, I could get a masters degree while I waited for my immigration status to resolve. This is where I reached out to my mentor, Dr. Ayati and the computer science department chair at UTRGV, Dr. Tomai, to help me achieve my goal of getting a masters degree in computer science.

During my bachelors, I fell in love with data science as I had worked very closely with my mentor for my capstone. This helped me to get admitted to the Masters program as I

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the main reason I've decided to write about my journey through college and share my story as an undocu-professional is to validate and provide comfort to other undocumented people. Creating your own path is hard, especially when you don't have access to the same resources as your US citizen peers, but I assure you that the skills and knowledge you acquire from doing it are invaluable. My recommendation for anyone

Overall, even though there's a lot of hardships and roadblocks, there are also so many rewarding experiences. Your time in college is the time that you get to meet different people from all walks of life; You create new friendships, and you'll network with people from your own career path. You'll discover new passions and dislikes, and truly get to explore who you are and what you want out of life. Take the most advantage of it.

had excellent recommendations from various professors. In addition, Dr. Tomai helped me look for scholarships, assistantships, and other forms of financial aid to get me to afford the program. Although this wasn't an easy task, I was later awarded a fellowship that paid for more than half my tuition during my first year, and received a 10k scholarship from Motorola for my second year.

Since then, I have graduated and I still haven't been able to fully resolve my immigration status, but I feel a lot less hopelessness. I've used my degree and career experiences to land freelance jobs, and contract work. I've worked as a paid freelance web developer for a non-profit organization outside of the valley and I am currently working as a contract IT specialist at another non-profit. My recommendation is to get your ITIN and look for contract work in small businesses and organizations locally, especially those that you feel are more welcoming to immigrants.

in a similar situation is to find your support system and confide in them about your status, it will make the road ahead easier and a lot less lonely. Trust that you'll be able to achieve all the things you propose to yourself, even if it's not clear how and it seems impossible; Once you start the journey, you'll find the right people and resources meant for you.

CHAPTER 2: NAVIGATING THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS



Now that you have gotten a glimpse into the possibilities college has to offer, let's talk about the actual college application process. At first glance, this process will look similar to that of your classmates'. However, there is an extra layer of awareness you need to have throughout it. In this chapter, we will go over a sample ApplyTexas application with emphasis on citizenship & Texas residency questions, what you should consider when choosing a major, and your personal statement. Additionally, we've included a couple of helpful tables. Let's begin with the most important factor in this journey, your college application.

SAMPLE APPLYTEXAS APPLICATION: EMPHASIS ON CITIZENSHIP & TEXAS RESIDENCY QUESTIONS

Any sort of application can be a bit overwhelming. This one especially comes with a bit of anxiety and confusion. However, taking it step by step helps simplify it. So that is exactly what we're going to do. We're mainly focusing on the citizenship and Texas residency questions of the application.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS LIVING IN THE RGV CANNOT LEGALLY PASS THE FALFURRIAS CHECKPOINT. YOU CAN APPLY TO SCHOOLS PAST THE CHECKPOINT AND HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO ATTEND THOSE SCHOOLS, BUT THE FALFURRIAS CHECKPOINT IS A LEGAL PHYSICAL BARRIER.

So what is ApplyTexas? ApplyTexas is the online platform you will use to send out your college admissions applications to schools in Texas. You can also use ApplyTexas to apply for scholarships. If you would like to apply to universities outside of Texas, you will need to use the CommonApplication online platform.

ApplyTexas will save your changes so feel free to reach out to your high school counselor if at any point you need assistance with the application.

THANKS TO THE FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) SCHOOL PERSONNEL CANNOT DISCLOSE PERSONAL STUDENT INFORMATION (INCLUDING IMMIGRATION STATUS). FOR THIS REASON, YOU SHOULD NOT HESITATE TO EXPRESS YOUR DESIRE TO ATTEND COLLEGE. REMEMBER TO ASK FOR HELP AND ADVICE FROM YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR DURING THIS PROCESS.

LET'S GET STARTED!

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

When creating an ApplyTexas account, like with anything concerning college, it is important to use your personal email. If you do not have one, create one first.

Once you have created your account you will be taken to a welcome page. In this page you have the option to visit My Texas Future in which you can explore career options and programs. Right below this option you will get a list of steps you will need to complete throughout your application.

STEP 1: FIND THE RIGHT APPLICATION

In this step you will go through high school status, course history, and U.S. citizenship questions. **Let's focus on the U.S. citizenship questions.**

- All questions regarding citizenship and visa status should be answered honestly. Rest assured, the information shared will remain with the college admissions office of the colleges you apply to.
- For most of you the correct answer is "None of the above apply to me". If you have any doubts, consult with your guardians before submitting the application.
- Select "Yes" if all of these circumstances apply to you.

The screenshot shows a question: "Are you a U.S. Citizen?" with radio button options for YES and NO. Below this, it asks "Which of these apply to you?" with four radio button options: "I hold permanent resident status (green card)", "I have an application for permanent residence pending", "I hold an eligible visa (list of eligible visas)", and "None of the above apply to me". The "None of the above apply to me" option is selected. At the bottom, there is a detailed question about Texas residency requirements with YES and NO radio button options.

STEP 2: CORE QUESTIONS

Step 2 covers information about you, your household, your education and testing, and your activities and achievements. Again, we will focus on the citizenship and residency questions.

- This answer should be the same as your country of birth. Every question should be answered honestly throughout the application.
- The answer to this question is probably "No". If you have any doubts, talk to your guardians to be sure.

Citizenship information

The screenshot shows the "Citizenship information" section. It includes the question "Are you a U.S. citizen?" with YES and NO radio button options. Below this is a dropdown menu for "Of what country are you a citizen?". Further down, it asks "Are you currently residing in the U.S.?" with YES and NO radio button options. At the bottom, it asks "Do you hold Permanent Residence status (valid I-551) for the U.S.?" with YES and NO radio button options.

STEP 2: CORE QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

- This can remain blank if it does not apply to you.
- Select "Yes" if this applies to you.

If you are not a U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident, are you a foreign national here with a visa that makes you eligible to domicile for Texas residency purposes (see list of eligible visas) or are you a Refugee, Asylee, Parolee or here under Temporary Protective Status? ⓘ

If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, do you have an application for permanent residence (form I-485) pending with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)? ⓘ

☐ YES

☒ NO

If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident or have no application pending with the USCIS, did you live or will you have lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months leading up to high school graduation or completion of the GED? ⓘ

☒ YES

☐ NO

- This is where you can establish Texas residency, meaning you qualify for in-state tuition.
- Select "Yes" to both of these questions if the circumstances apply to you.

Texas residency

mandatory - Step 2 of 3

On this page, enter information about where you live. This information helps schools determine if you are a Texas resident. Schools use residency status to determine in-state tuition rates and scholarship applications.

Of what state are you a resident? *

Texas

Did you live or will you have lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months leading up to high school graduation or completion of the GED? ⓘ

☒ YES

☐ NO

When you begin the semester for which you are applying, will you have lived in Texas for the previous 12 months? *

☒ YES

☐ NO

- **Example:** If you have lived in Texas for 3 full years and 4 months, you would put 3 years on this question and 4 months on this one.
- Your main purpose of living in Texas is to establish and maintain a home. Texas is your home, after all.

If you currently live in Texas, how many years have you been living here? *

3

If you currently live in Texas, how many months (not including the years you entered above) have you been living here? *

4

If you currently live in Texas, what is your main purpose for being in the state? ⓘ

Establish/Maintain a home

- Answer these questions honestly.

Do you hold the title to residential real property in Texas? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

Do you have ownership interest and customarily manage a business in Texas without the intention of liquidation in the foreseeable future? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

Have you been gainfully employed in Texas for the past 12 months? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

Have you received primary support from a social services agency for the past 12 months? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

Are you married to a person who either: owns property in Texas, owns a business in Texas, is gainfully employed in Texas, or has received primary support from a social service agency? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

- Consult with your guardians if you do not know the answer to any of these questions.

Is the parent or legal guardian upon whom you base your claim of residency a U.S. Citizen? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

If not, is the parent or legal guardian upon whom you base your claim of residency a Permanent Resident of the U.S.? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

Does this parent or guardian currently live in Texas? *

☒ YES ☐ NO

If your parent or legal guardian is currently living in Texas, how many years have they been living here? *

3

If your parent or legal guardian is currently living in Texas, how many months (not including the years you entered above) have they been living here? *

4

Does your parent or legal guardian hold the title to residential real property in Texas? *

☐ YES ☒ NO

- You will need to submit a notarized Residency Affidavit (Appendix A) to every school you apply to.

Residency Affidavit *

If you are not a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident, [please open the Residency Affidavit](#), print a copy, fill it out and submit it to the school to which you are applying.

☒ I have completed this step OR I confirm it is not applicable to me because I'm a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident.

STEP 3: SELECT A SCHOOL AND APPLY

Search for colleges and universities, select, and apply.



Viewing 1 of 1 Sort by: App deadline (closest to furthest) ✓

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Valderrada (last-year) • Fall 2025

Residency: ☐ None ☒ Subject ☐ Anklebite ☐ Scholarship application

App deadline	App opens	App. fee	Merit fee
Aug 27, 2025	Aug 01, 2024	\$9.50	0%

Save for later View details →

First Previous 1 Next Last

CHOOSING YOUR MAJOR

“WHAT ARE YOU MAJORING IN?” is perhaps a question you’ve heard recently. Another way of asking this is “What are you getting your degree on?”. So, do you know the answer to those questions? Let’s start with defining what a major is. A major refers to an academic field of study. For example, Political Science and Engineering are majors. A degree is what your chosen school will give you upon completion of a program of study, meaning you’ve completed all the needed classes in order to graduate. Before you get your degree & degree plan, you need to pick a major. Choosing a major can be a crucial decision for any student, and for undocumented students, it might come with additional considerations.

HERE ARE SOME DETAILS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- **SKILLS & INTERESTS:** Think about what you’re good at and what you enjoy doing. Consider your strengths, passions, and skills you want to develop further.
- **VALUES & GOALS:** Reflect on your values and long-term goals. What kind of impact do you want to make? What career path aligns with your values?
- **EXPLORE OPTIONS:** Look into various majors and careers. Research online, talk with professionals, and take advantage of resources at your school and community.
- **CONSIDER PRACTICALITY:** While passion is vital, consider the practicality of the major. Look up potential salaries and growth opportunities.
- **LEGAL LIMITATIONS:** Understand any legal limitations related to your status. Some majors may have specific requirements or barriers for undocumented folks. For example, careers that require you to get certified by the state of Texas will be difficult to fulfill as you need a Social Security Number for that.
- **NETWORK:** If possible, connect with other undocumented students or professionals. They can offer advice and share their experiences navigating similar situations.

AT LUPE, WE OFFER SUPPORT AND DELIVER RELEVANT INFORMATION WHILE PROVIDING A SAFE SPACE TO BUILD COMMUNITY. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO REACH OUT TO US!

- **BE FLEXIBLE:** Your major doesn’t necessarily dictate your career. Many careers accept diverse majors. You can focus on gaining relevant experiences and skills.
- **JOB SECURITY OUTSIDE OF THE US:** You deserve to thrive in the U.S. just like anyone else. Plus, you never know when you will be able to fix your status. It might be closer than you think. However, for some people, going back to their home country might be the best option. If you are considering this, you may want to consider careers that will have job security in your home country. There are cases of students that have obtained a college degree from the U.S., left for another country, and have become successful because of the credentials they earned here.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, BELIEVE IN YOURSELF & TRUST YOUR INTUITION. YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS DOES NOT DEFINE YOU OR YOUR CAPABILITIES. BELIEVE IN YOUR POTENTIAL AND FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Along with your college application, you may need to submit your personal statement at ApplyTexas if applying to a 4-year university. A personal statement is basically a college essay. ApplyTexas has 3 main essay prompts. Although, not all 3 are required to apply to schools in Texas. Every school has different requirements in terms of college essays so make sure to do your research. Writing a compelling personal statement requires careful thought, planning, and a focus on highlighting your unique strengths and experiences. Admissions officers read thousands of essays, so it's important to stand out and make a memorable impression. Your personal statement can increase your chances of getting into a school and can help with getting scholarships.

BELOW ARE PRACTICAL TIPS TO HELP WITH YOUR ESSAY WRITING PROCESS:

UNDERSTAND THE PROMPT: Start by thoroughly reading and understanding the essay prompt. Make sure you address all aspects of the question in your essay.

BRAINSTORM IDEAS: Reflect on your experiences, challenges, values, and achievements. Take into consideration moments that have had a significant impact on your personal growth.

CREATE AN OUTLINE: A typical essay includes an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. In the introduction, you should grab the reader's attention with a compelling hook and provide a concise thesis statement.

TELL A STORY: Share a specific experience or anecdote that illustrates your unique qualities and strengths. Show, don't tell. Instead of saying you're determined, describe a situation in which your determination was demonstrated.

HIGHLIGHT YOUR UNIQUE QUALITIES: Think about your unique qualities, skills, and passions. What sets you apart from other applicants? Talk about any challenges you have overcome and how they've shaped who you are.

REVISE AND EDIT: Once completing your first draft, take a break and come back to it with fresh eyes. Check for grammar and spelling, while also paying attention to the overall flow and structure. Reach out to your teachers, counselors, parents, siblings, and friends for feedback and suggestions.

PROOFREAD AND FINALIZE: After making your last edits, proofread your essay one last time to make sure it's error-free.



The College Scholarship Leadership Access Program (CSLAP) is a nonprofit organization that provides students with resources regarding college access. You can visit their website for more tips to help you write your personal statement.
<https://www.cslapofficial.com/essays>

ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST/TIMELINE

The following checklist/timeline can be helpful in regards to admissions. It guides you from the start of your Spring semester of Junior year all the way to December of your Senior year. As time goes by, begin to check off important actions to make sure you are on track with your college admissions process.

TARGET COMPLETION DATE	OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
SPRING SEMESTER OF JUNIOR YEAR	Take the SAT, ACT and/or TSI college admissions tests. You can register for a test at the following links. www.collegeboard.com www.actstudent.org	Some schools are test optional, meaning they do not require you to submit your scores for admissions. However, it is highly encouraged to submit scores for scholarships. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you receive free lunch at your school, you may be eligible for a fee waiver. • Talk to your school counselor for more information.
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER OF SENIOR YEAR	Select your schools.	When choosing what schools to apply to take into consideration the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance- As an undocumented student, the Falfurrias checkpoint is a physical barrier that legally prevents you from moving up North. This doesn't have to prevent you from applying to those schools. In fact, you are eligible to attend those schools. However, it's important to keep in mind that you can't legally pass the checkpoint. • Degrees Offered- Make sure the schools you are applying to offer the degree you are interested in. • Tuition- Although, this is a very important factor to keep in mind, it should not prevent you from applying to a school.
	Start Applications	This guide, especially the "Sample Apply Texas Application" portion, will be your bestie throughout this process. Have it handy to follow along. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can also get fee waivers for college applications. • Talk to your school counselor for more information.
	Get Affidavit of Intent notarized	You will need to provide a notarized affidavit to every school you apply to in order to get accepted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not sign the affidavit until you are with the notary public. • You will need a photo ID, this can be your school ID. • This form will grant you eligibility to pay in-state tuition and receive state financial aid (TASFA), if you qualify. • For a low cost, you can get the affidavit notarized at LUPE if you are a member. A student annual membership is \$20.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER OF SENIOR YEAR	Submit your applications before the deadline.	<p>Submit the following documents to the admissions office of each school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official sealed high school transcript or electronic transcript/TREx • Application fee (or fee waiver). • Notarized Affidavit of Intent. • Essays, Resume, and Letters of Recommendation. • Make sure that your SAT, ACT, and/or TSI scores have been received.
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER OF SENIOR YEAR	Make sure the schools you applied to have received all necessary documents.	Constantly check your email and online portal in case you receive notice of any missing documents.
FALL OF SENIOR YEAR	Submit your TASFA application.	<p>TASFA applications usually open on October 1 with the priority deadline being January 15 of the following year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These dates may change depending on the school year. Please talk to your counselor for any updates. • There's more information on TASFA in Chapter 3!
	Reach out to at least 3 recommenders.	Who will write a letter of recommendation for you? A teacher, coach, mentor? Make a list of who you will ask and reach out to them.

LIST OF RGV COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	TUITION
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY	1201 W University Dr, Edinburg, TX 78539 1 W University Blvd, Brownsville, TX 78520	\$9, 859
SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE	3201 Pecan Blvd, McAllen, TX 78501 (main campus)	\$2,460 for In-District \$2,610 for Out of District
TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE	1902 N Loop 499, Harlingen, TX 78550	Depends on specific programs
TEXAS SOUTHMOST COLLEGE	80 Ft Brown St, Brownsville, TX 78520	\$1,925 for In-District \$2,300 for Out of District
OUR LADY OF THE LAKE RGV	1650 S Main St, La Feria, TX 78559	\$15,556
TEXAS A&M HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER AT MCALLEN	6200 Tres Lagos Blvd, McAllen, TX 78504	\$11, 550

THE TUITION DEMONSTRATED HERE IS BASED ON 15 CREDITS PER SEMESTER. ADDITIONALLY, THESE TUITION RATES ARE FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE EACH YEAR. IT IS ENCOURAGED TO LOOK UP THE LATEST RATES AT EACH OF THE INSTITUTIONS' WEBSITES.

CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL AID

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Knowing how you're going to finance your education is one of the most important steps in the college application process. It can often break or make a student's decision to attend college. Take this as reassurance that there is plenty of financial help for undocumented students. Most of this aid is free money you can use to pay your tuition and other necessities like books.

Before we get into the different forms of financial aid available to you, it is important you understand some of the language that will be used in your student bill. Let's get started!

STUDENT BILL TERMINOLOGY

COST OF ATTENDANCE: The maximum amount a college may cost for one school year. Colleges take various things into consideration when calculating the cost of attendance like tuition, meal plan, fees, housing and more. Think of the cost of attendance as an estimate. For example, if you will not be living on campus then you will not be charged for housing and so on.

TUITION: The amount you owe to attend college for courses and instruction you register for.

IN-STATE TUITION: The amount charged to students that attend a college within their state of residence.

OUT OF STATE TUITION: The amount charged to students that attend a college outside of their state of residence. Since the students and their families have not contributed to the state's tax revenue their tuition will be higher than in-state students'.

CREDIT HOURS: The U.S. Department of Education defines a credit hour by a single semester credit hour as 1 hour per week of class time and 2 hours of student preparation time. Most courses are worth 3 credit hours but there are some that may be worth less such as labs. To simplify it, every course is worth about 3 credit hours per semester. In order to graduate with a Bachelor's degree you need to accumulate at least 120 credit hours.

FULL-TIME: To be considered a full-time student, you must be enrolled in 12 credit hours a semester. This is important for financial aid purposes because some scholarships may require you to be a full-time student.

PART-TIME: You will be considered a part-time student if you take anything less than 12 credit hours per semester.

TASFA

Unfortunately, undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid. However, if you qualify as a Texas resident through the Texas DREAM Act (Chapter 1), then you qualify for the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). TASFA was designed for students who are not eligible to apply for federal financial aid due to their immigration status, this includes undocumented students and certain categories of non-citizens. This application can be a fundamental support for financing college. The application is completely free, as is the financial aid you'll receive.

REQUIREMENTS:

- **Affidavit of Intent to become a permanent legal resident (Appendix A).**
- **Parent's income information from 2 years ago**
 - Tax return
 - Or Non-tax filer form (Appendix B)
- **Selective Service Registration (students assigned male at birth)**

If your parents do not file taxes you will need to submit a Non-tax filer form. We will talk more about this later!

Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid offers services to the LGBTQ+ community such as support with name change and gender marker correction. For any concerns regarding this portion of the application, you can reach out to them at (956)996-8752.

Okay, let's break these down.

AFFIDAVIT OF INTENT: As discussed in Chapter 1, the Texas DREAM Act grants undocumented students the opportunity to go to college and to receive state financial aid. First, you must meet the bills' qualifications in order to be considered a Texas resident. Then you must turn in an affidavit of intent to every school you apply to. This affidavit will be needed for admissions and financial aid purposes.

PARENT'S INCOME INFORMATION: As long as you are a dependent of your parents, the school you are attending will need this information throughout your undergraduate years. The reason being is that TASFA awards aid on a needs basis. This basically means that the amount of financial aid you will receive from TASFA depends on how much money your parents make and other factors. Additionally, the application will always ask for your parents income information from 2 years ago. For example, your first semester of college will be Fall 2025 therefore you will need to provide your school with your parents 2023 income info. Your sophomore year will begin in the Fall of 2026 therefore you will need to provide your school with your parents 2024 income info. And so on...

SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION: This only applies to students assigned male at birth. In the United States, it is a legal obligation for most people assigned male at birth to register with the Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. This is mandatory for students assigned male at birth between the ages of 18 to 25 and it is a requirement for TASFA. This is a way to ensure that the government has a record of eligible individuals who can be drafted in case of a national emergency. If you are 18 years old and not registered then you will be ineligible for financial aid. Of course, there are instances that may exempt you from registering. You can find this information at the Selective Service System website.



<https://www.sss.gov/register/who-needs-to-register/>

You can register for the Selective Service at your local post office. The post office has the form you need to fill out or you can download it by clicking the link below. Once you're done filling out the form you will need to mail it to the following address.



<https://www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Form-1-Resized.pdf>

Selective Service System
P.O. Box 94739
Palatine, IL 60094-4739

It usually takes 30 to 90 days to receive proof of registration. You will need to show this confirmation to your school in order for them to process your TASFA application.

LEGISLATION IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING. CHECK IN WITH YOUR COUNSELOR FOR ANY CHANGES.

WHERE TO FIND IT



The TASFA application can be found on The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website.
<https://www.highered.texas.gov/our-work/empowering-our-students/tasfa/>

OVERVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

TAXFILER: If your parents file their taxes and claim you as a dependent on them, then congrats the application process should be fairly easy. You would simply go to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, create an account using a personal email, and begin your application. After submitting the application, schools will ask you to provide them with your parents tax return from two years ago. And then you're pretty much done. Now all that's left to do is to constantly check your email and your school online portal, if you already have one, to make sure you accept the financial aid the school offers you.

- If your parents are undocumented as well they can file their taxes with an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). The ITIN was created solely so that undocumented individuals can file their taxes. Individuals can apply for an ITIN number at their nearest Social Security Administration Office or a tax preparation agency. LUPE members can apply for an ITIN at a lower cost at any of our offices.
- If your parents file their taxes and would like to claim you as a dependent on them then you will also need an ITIN number.

EVER SINCE EARLY 2024, TASFA HAS BEEN AN ONLINE APPLICATION. THE PAPER VERSION WILL CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE BUT IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO APPLY ONLINE AS YOU CAN AUTOMATICALLY SUBMIT THE APPLICATION TO UP TO 10 SCHOOLS IN TEXAS.

NON-TAXFILER: If your parents do not file taxes, don't worry you can still apply for TASFA. First things first, you need to [create](#) an account at The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, remember to use your personal email, then begin your application. Once you have submitted the application you're going to need a Non-Tax Filer form (Appendix B). This form states that your parents did not file **AND** are not required to file taxes for that year. The form also requires your parents to state their income from two years ago. You will need to get this form notarized before submitting it to the schools you sent a TASFA application to. You can submit it by mailing it or going to the school's financial aid office.

Disclaimer: If your parents make more than the threshold as required by the IRS, then your school may ask you for proof of income and will not process your TASFA application until you provide it. Sometimes the school may even ask for your parents to file their taxes. The chart below should help you assess this.

FILING STATUS	TAXPAYER AGE AT THE END OF 2023	YOU MUST FILE AN INCOME IF YOUR GROSS INCOME WAS AT LEAST:
SINGLE	UNDER 65	\$13,850
SINGLE	65 OR OLDER	\$15,700
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	UNDER 65	\$20,800
HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	65 OR OLDER	\$22,650
MARRIED FILING JOINTLY	UNDER 65 (BOTH SPOUSES)	\$27,700
MARRIED FILING JOINTLY	65 OR OLDER	\$29,200
MARRIED FILING JOINTLY	65 OR OLDER (BOTH SPOUSES)	\$30,700
MARRIED FILING SEPARATELY	ANY AGE	\$5
QUALIFYING SURVIVING SPOUSE	UNDER 65	\$27,700
QUALIFYING SURVIVING SPOUSE	65 OR OLDER	\$29,200

THESE NUMBERS ARE OFTEN UPDATED ON A YEARLY BASIS. YOU CAN VISIT THE [IRS WEBSITE](#) FOR UPDATED NUMBERS.

IMPORTANT DATES

The application **usually** opens on **October 1st** with the priority deadline being **January 15** of the following year. Again, some school years may differ therefore ask your counselor about important dates. The priority deadline is the date by which you need to submit your application to be considered for the maximum amount of aid available. Meeting this deadline increases your chances of receiving aid because it allows institutions to allocate funds more efficiently. It is also important to know that TASFA has less funds compared to FAFSA because TASFA funds come from the state of Texas unlike FAFSA funds that come from the federal government. Meaning it is recommended to submit your application as soon as possible. With that being said, you will most likely receive aid even if you submit your application after the priority deadline, but the amount awarded could be reduced due to limited funds. However, it is understandable that specific circumstances may prevent you from meeting that priority deadline. Please don't let these circumstances prevent you from submitting your application at any point. Better late than never.

DEPENDENCY STATUS

YOU ARE CONSIDERED INDEPENDENT IF:

- You are married
- You are working on a master's or doctorate
- You serve in the U.S. armed forces or are a veteran
- You at anytime after the age of 13 were an orphan, ward of court, or in foster care
- You are an emancipated minor
- You have a court-ordered legal guardian
- You have children or dependents who live with and receive more than half of their support from you
- You are an unaccompanied youth who is homeless

If you can say yes to any of the above then you are considered independent. This means you have to provide schools with your income information, not your parents.

TASFA CASE STUDIES: COMMON SCENARIOS

Hello there! My name is Luis Castillo, and I am the former Director of Education at LUPE. During my time as a community organizer and college-readiness advisor, I had the opportunity to help many undocumented students like you access higher education. From Brownsville to Rio Grande City, I have seen almost every possible scenario, and I can say without a doubt that the number one question undocumented students have is: how will I pay for college?

As someone who went to college while undocumented, I know that it can be scary to think about what would happen if you do not receive any financial aid. While there is financial aid for undocu students in the form of TASFA, most of us do not fit perfectly in the fields of the application, and filling it out incorrectly could result in the application process being delayed or even denied. However, even in the toughest of the cases I have seen, people have found a way to reach their goals. Yes, every case is different, but there are some commonalities amongst most situations.

Thus, I have compiled some of the most common scenarios that I have come across while advising undocumented students along with some possible solutions.

“MY PARENTS DO NOT FILE TAXES.”

If your parents have never filed taxes before, or if they did not file the required year for your TASFA application, they can still report their income. At any point during the year, your parents can report their income for up to three prior fiscal years. This means that they can still file their income for the “prior-prior” year, which would be the one used for TASFA. However, it is important to keep in mind that the IRS will charge a fee for income reported late—on top of any income that is due. That said, you can submit a copy of your parents’ income tax form for your financial aid application even if there are overdue taxes.

As you have learned in this guide, there is a scale that indicates what yearly income is required to be reported. However, if your parents made more than \$400 in a year, they can still file their taxes even though it is not technically required (source: “Here’s who needs to file in 2024”. IRS website (2024). <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/heres-who-needs-to-file-a-tax-return-in-2024>).

Something to keep in mind is that if the income information you provide on your TASFA indicates that your parents must file an income tax, then the university will likely ask you to provide an income tax form in order to process your application. This can result in your application being delayed, which can lower your chances of receiving aid on time or the full amount you are eligible for.

“MY PARENTS FILED TAXES, BUT THEY DIDN’T CLAIM ME AS A DEPENDENT.”

If your parents only claimed their children with social security numbers when filing their taxes, leaving you out of their income tax report, you have two options:

- **OPTION 1:** You can have your parents file a 1040-X form (an amendment of their income tax). Your parents can then put you in their income tax form. However, this option may result in your parents losing tax credits (or benefits), which then have to be paid back to the IRS.
- **OPTION 2:** You can submit your parents’ income tax information even if they did not claim you as their dependent. According to the IRS, only children that have a social security number (SSN) can be claimed as dependents for tax purposes. While it is possible to include children that do not have a SSN by using an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN), you technically do not need to file an ITIN if you have not worked.

If you choose the second option, you may also provide a letter stating that you live with your parents and they provide for you along with your TASFA application. This can facilitate the review process of your application and prevent the need for further documentation. Nonetheless, it is the discretion of your college’s financial aid office to ask for more evidence.

Moreover, we advise parents to claim all dependents regardless of immigration status. This can prove useful in some immigration cases where the person needs to provide evidence of presence in the U.S. as is the case of those applying for DACA.

“ONLY ONE OF MY PARENTS FILE TAXES”

If you live with only one of your parents, then you are only required to submit that parent's income information. However, you must also indicate that you only live with that parent in your ApplyTexas application.

Your financial aid application is based on the information you provided in your ApplyTexas. Thus, if you indicated that your parents are married and that you live with them, then you will be required to provide an income tax where they filed jointly.

You have to keep in mind that TASFA is a way for a college or university to determine your eligibility for financial aid based on your financial situation. Therefore, it is important that the information you provide on your ApplyTexas application matches the information present on your parents' income tax form. Otherwise, the university may require more information resulting in your application being paused.

“I ACCIDENTALLY MARKED THAT I AM A U.S. CITIZEN IN MY APPLYTEXAS”

As we have discussed, your financial aid application is dependent on the information on your ApplyTexas. If you accidentally indicated that you are a U.S. citizen in the application, your college will then ask you to submit a FAFSA. If you made this mistake, contact the admissions office of the college you are applying immediately to let them know of the situation. Your college will either amend the application or ask you to submit another application, allowing you to then submit a TASFA.

“CAN I SUBMIT TASFA AFTER THE PRIORITY DEADLINE?”

SO, YOU HAVE COMPLETED TASFA AND COLLECTED ALL DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID, BUT THE PRIORITY DEADLINE HAS PASSED. SHOULD YOU STILL SUBMIT THE APPLICATION?

The answer is yes. The priority deadline is not the final deadline to submit TASFA. In fact, there is no actual deadline for TASFA. Therefore, if you missed the deadline by a few days or even weeks, you should submit it as there is still a chance that you receive financial aid. However, even though there is no final deadline to submit the application, you have to remember that the funds are limited. Thus, the longer you wait to submit TASFA, the higher the risk you run of not receiving financial aid.

NOW, WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU MISS THE PRIORITY DEADLINE BY MONTHS. FOR INSTANCE, IT IS SUMMER AND YOU STILL HAVE NOT COMPLETED YOUR FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION. SHOULD YOU STILL SUBMIT THE APPLICATION?

Again, the answer is yes. Even if there is one month left before the beginning of the Fall semester, it is recommended that you still submit your TASFA application as there could be a chance that you receive financial aid. Of course, availability of funds and processing times vary from college to college. In this scenario, if you do not receive financial aid or if your application is not processed on time, you may still apply for what is called an emergency loan. This should be your last resort as you are still required to pay the loan in full by the end of the semester. This is a great option if you know you will have the

funds to pay it on time. Each college has its own policy for applying for emergency loans, but these are available to undocumented students.

SO, WHEN IS IT TOO LATE TO SUBMIT TASFA?

If your goal is to attend college during the Fall semester, then submitting TASFA less than one month before classes begin would be considered “too” late. However, you should still submit it and attend classes in the Spring semester in January. Equally, you can wait until the next Fall semester to apply.

In conclusion, to maximize your chances of receiving financial aid, you should submit your application before the priority deadline. Even if that date has passed, you should still submit it; however, you have to be aware that there is a chance that you do not receive financial aid.

“I DO NOT LIVE WITH MY PARENTS”

According to TASFA, any person under the age of 24 that is unmarried and without children is considered a dependent and is required to submit income information of their legal guardian. This means that even if you are above the age of 18 or if you do not live with your parents, you may still be required to submit your parent’s or legal guardian’s financial information. However, there are situations that exempt the person from having to provide such information.

If you live with a relative that is not your court-appointed legal guardian—in other words, you live with your grandma but your parents never signed a document or appeared before a judge to grant your grandma your legal custody—then you are still required to submit your parents’ financial information even if you did not live with them during the prior-prior fiscal year. However, if you have no contact with your parents or if they live in another country and are unable to live here, you may be considered an **unaccompanied youth**. According to TASFA, an unaccompanied youth is a person who does not live within the physical custody of their parents or guardian. Usually, a high school counselor may determine this and put it on record. Nonetheless, if your high school counselor did not determine this, you should talk to your college’s financial aid advisor who can make this determination. Once you are labeled as an unaccompanied youth, then you are not required to provide your parent’s income information.

IF THIS IS YOUR EXPERIENCE, YOU SHOULD MEET WITH A HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR SO THAT YOU CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS AN UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH UNDER THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT. THIS CAN FACILITATE YOUR FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION PROCESS THROUGHOUT YOUR COLLEGE CAREER.

Now, if your parents live in another country but they still support you financially, you may choose to submit the income tax declaration they filed in their country. The college would then determine your eligibility for financial aid based on the conversion of their income to dollars. It is important to keep in mind that this still needs to be their prior-prior income tax.

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

Thank you Luis for that invaluable information! Now let's continue onto scholarships and grants.

TASFA is an aid to help pay your tuition. If for some reason, TASFA does not cover all of your tuition, scholarships and grants are great options to help pay the rest of it. Additionally, scholarships and grants can help with expenses such as books, access codes, perhaps buying a laptop. Although local scholarships and grants open to undocumented students are rare, there are so many national scholarships available for you to apply. There are two types of scholarships and grants, non-conditional and conditional.

- **NON-CONDITIONAL:** Free money without any requirements.
- **CONDITIONAL:** Scholarships or grants with conditions you must meet or you will lose the aid and possibly even owe money back. When applying check to see if the aid has any requirements and what the penalty is for not meeting them.

With that out of the way, let's talk about what differentiates scholarships from grants. Scholarships are typically awarded based on your achievements, skills, talents, or other criteria specified by the scholarship. They are often merit-based and may require maintaining certain academic standards or meeting criteria. Again, when you apply to a scholarship check to see what its requirements are so that you are aware of them.

WEBSITES WITH SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DADUMENTED & UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS:

- SCHOLARSHIPS A-Z
- UNITED WE DREAM
- THE DREAM U.S. SCHOLARSHIP
- IMMIGRANTS RISING
- HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP CONSORTIUM
- MALDEF
- GOLDEN DOOR SCHOLARS

For local scholarships, consult with your high school counselor to see if they know of any scholarships open to undocumented students. Additionally, visit your chosen college or university's website and go through the scholarships listed. This may be a bit time consuming as you have to go through every scholarship's requirements, but you will most likely find a couple local scholarships you are eligible to apply for.

Now moving onto grants. Grants are usually need-based financial aid. They are awarded based on your financial circumstances or specific criteria outlined by the grant. Additionally, they are often provided by governments, institutions, or private organizations. Make sure to check any requirements when applying grants.

If you are applying to a 2-year institution like South Texas College, then you must complete and submit a Confirmation of Eligibility Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG) and Texas Grant form (Appendix C). In most cases, the school will provide you with the form when you submit your TASFA application.

OTHER WAYS OF FINANCING COLLEGE

LOANS:

Private Student Loans can have high variable interest rates and are not required to offer the same repayment benefits as federal student loans. These types of loans generally cost more and typically require a credit check.

- Schools such as UTRGV offer Emergency Loans. In order to qualify for an Emergency Loan, you must be enrolled in classes and may not receive any other type of financial aid. The loan incurs an origination fee of 1% of the total amount borrowed for each emergency fee loan. These loans are required to be paid before the semester that the loan was taken out for ends. If the loan is not paid by then, you will not be able to register for the following semester until it is paid off.

LOANS SHOULD ONLY BE CONSIDERED AS A LAST RESORT.

PAYING OUT OF POCKET/PAYMENT PLANS:

Of course, there is the option to pay for school out of pocket but we both know that isn't always an option for everyone. However, if you have the privilege to be able to do this you can pay for the semester all at once or you can sign up for a payment plan at your school's financial aid office.

CHAPTER 4: ACKNOWLEDGING A BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM & NAVIGATING LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

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In the immigrant community, there exists a misconception that hard work inevitably leads to recognition and reward within this country. This belief has created the “perfect immigrant” narrative, fostering the expectation that diligence and dedication will prevent certain situations. Reality often leaves many feeling disillusioned and disappointed. Unfortunately, this reality is shaped by a broken immigration system that fails to acknowledge our hard work and dedication. Despite these challenges, understanding and navigating the legal system is crucial. You have probably often wondered what legal remedies are available for your specific situation.

BELOW YOU WILL FIND SOME OF THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN FIX YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS

FAMILY PETITION:

You may qualify for legal status through a family member who is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident. This process involves an immediate relative sponsoring you for a green card, but it often comes with lengthy waiting periods and eligibility criteria. With a LUPE membership, you can make an appointment with our immigration lawyer for a consultation on this option.

EMPLOYMENT SPONSORSHIP:

If you secure a job offer from a U.S. employer willing to sponsor your visa, you may be able to obtain legal status through employment-based visas. This pathway can be competitive and require specific job qualifications and visa availability.

REFUGEE/ASYLUM:

If you fear persecution or have experienced past persecution in your home country you may seek asylum or refugee status in the United States. This requires demonstrating a well-founded fear of persecution and often involves a complex legal process.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS OPTION YOU CAN REACH OUT TO TEXAS RIO GRANDE LEGAL AID FOR ASSISTANCE AT (956)996-8752

VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

If you have been subjected to abuse by a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse, parent, or child you may be eligible for immigration relief independently of your abuser.

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING THIS, PLEASE CONTACT MUJERES UNIDAS FOR HELP. THEIR SERVICES ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE. THEIR HOT-LINE IS 1-800-580-4879.

Each of these paths has its challenges and eligibility requirements. Seeking guidance from an immigration attorney can be crucial for understanding your options and navigating complex legal procedures effectively.

CHAPTER 5: WELL BEING & THRIVING IN COLLEGE



College is a time for growth, exploration, and learning. You will do A LOT of growing during this journey. A big part of growing will come from the lessons you will learn and experiences you will go through. Of course like with anything in life being undocumented will affect your time in college. All the emotions you will feel are completely valid, so feel them. However, don't let the emotions and thoughts consume you. Spending time on circumstances you cannot control is a losing game. My advice is to focus on what you can control. The following strategies will help you not only survive but thrive during your college journey.

STRATEGIES

MENTAL HEALTH: The stress of navigating college as an undocumented student can take a toll on your mental health. Universities often offer counseling services (included in your tuition and fees), which can be a safe space to discuss your concerns and develop coping strategies. Additionally, practicing a form of self-care can help manage stress. Some people go on nature walks, others watch their comfort shows/movies. We all have our own form of self-care, it's important you find yours.

EMBRACING SUPPORT SYSTEMS: Building a support network outside of your family is important. Seek out resources on campus like multicultural centers and student organizations/clubs, that offer guidance and a sense of community. As well as local and national organizations that may offer resources. Connecting with other undocumented students and allies can provide invaluable emotional support and practical advice.

LUPE IS A GREAT PLACE TO RECEIVE VALUABLE INFORMATION WHILE BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY OF UNDOCUMENTED FOLKS.

TIME MANAGEMENT: Develop a schedule that balances academics, work (if applicable), and personal time. Prioritize tasks, set realistic goals, and allocate time for self-care activities to prevent burnout. Make time for friends, family, and yourself!

BUILD A SUPPORT SYSTEM WITH FACULTY: Cultivate a relationship with professors, advisors, and mentors. They can offer guidance, academic support, and sometimes advocate on your behalf.

FINANCIAL PLANNING: Investigate scholarship opportunities and financial aid options available to you. Managing your finances effectively can alleviate stress related to tuition and living expenses.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: Familiarize yourself with your legal rights as an undocumented person. Understanding your situation can empower you to make informed decisions and seek appropriate assistance when needed.

YOU CAN VISIT THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS.
[HTTPS://WWW.ACLU.ORG/KNOW-YOUR-RIGHTS/IMMIGRANTS-RIGHTS](https://www.aclu.org/now-your-rights/immigrants-rights)

STAY POSITIVE AND RESILIENT: Thriving in college as an undocumented student involves resilience, determination, and utilizing available resources. Remember, you are not alone on this journey. Seek and embrace your community. Focus on your goals, celebrate achievements, and keep a positive mindset.

EMBRACING THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY

The Rio Grande Valley is a unique region for many reasons. One being the fact that it is in between two barriers, the U.S./Mexico border and the Falfurrias checkpoint. Undocumented folks can't go south or north. This inbetweenness can often lead to feeling stuck. When these feelings arise it's important to focus on what you can control and what is available to you. Sometimes visiting a new place can spark joy and hope. There are so many gems in the Valley that you should visit. You could easily find them with a quick google search, "What to do in the RGV ". My personal favorites are downtown Brownsville and the Museum of South Texas History in Edinburg. There are some honorable mentions such as Quinta Mazatlan in Mcallen and Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in Alamo. For this portion I wanted to give you more hands-on options and opportunities to go into welcoming spaces that can help you build community, which is why I have asked my friend, Out in the 956, to put something together for you.

A LETTER FROM OUT IN THE 956

I am a creative and cultural promoter from Palmview, Texas. As the creator of Out In The 956, I use my online platform to showcase local creatives, businesses, individuals, and special events within the Rio Grande Valley community. Shining a light on RGV Creatives for what they do!

What drove me to create Out In The 956 was community engagement, being involved, meeting new people, learning about them. Everyone has a reason for what they put out there. We see

things from our own perspective, but understanding the view of the individual brings insight into what is in front of us. From their art, interests, hobbies, business, a local gathering, or special event. There's a story to be told, a gem to uncover.

When it came to the task at hand. I thought about social media and places that have allowed myself and others to be hands on. While I love going out to a show there's always the weekday/ weekend workshop around the corner. If there's something I live by that's to try something new. Workshops, workshops vary in activity, vary in mediums, vary in conversations, topics, themes, and individuals who attend. Do you like writing or have thought about writing? There's unfolded poetry! Do you like movies or want to engage yourself in a more film-media crowd? There's Entre! Every single one of these locations and social media outlets are posting a weekly/bi-weekly event. ***THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING HAPPENING IN THE VALLEY!***

I've experienced and built relationships with these folks that I could've written about them but it was best to hear from the founders, staff members, and artists behind these social media platforms and locations that they've dreamt about, conceptualized, and brought to life.

Follow [**@outinthe956**](#) on Instagram for more info!

NEVER BEFORE ZINE

Never-Before-Zine is an autonomous artist collective participating in collaborative and personal practices in the RGV. Our artists come from different backgrounds, levels of skill and work in a variety of media, but our work connects through zine making, DIY art education and local art preservation.

Collective members facilitate a variety of skill sharing and collaborative art making events aimed at getting the community to participate in new ways.

We are currently working on hosting an art swap, community art salon and hosting a circulatory zine library composed of materials contributed by local artists. We would like to extend an invitation to become a member to any and all RGV residents, so long as they are community-minded and respectful.

Follow [**@neverbeforezine**](#) on Instagram for more info!

BEYOND BORDERS BOOK CLUB

Beyond Borders Book Club is a community of readers who are passionate about creating change through art and literature! We are committed to learning more about the issues that define our world: immigration, racism, class, education, etc. We believe that in talking and reading about these issues, we can learn how to better advocate and take action.

Join us every month at the Pharr Memorial Library from 11AM-12:30PM. Food and snacks are always available!

Follow @beyondbordersbookclub on Instagram for more info!

TRUCHA

Trucha has always been committed to showcasing a narrative of the Rio Grande Valley from a more holistic and progressive lens. As a multimedia nonprofit organization, we aim to uplift and shift the culture and social movements of migrant and queer communities in the RGV through sharing stories, community journalism, videography, and creative programming. Our vision is to cultivate a grassroots narrative of the frontera with movement journalism, documentaries, artistic opportunities, local partnerships with organizations, and building a strong foundation of storytellers throughout the Texas borderlands.

Students can find Trucha at local events throughout the year that focus on arts, journalism, and community projects. Events will be announced primarily through our Instagram. Additionally, if students wish to engage in movement journalism, they are encouraged to pitch stories that relate to our mission through our pitch process. If anyone has any questions, they are welcome to send an email to hello@truchargv.com.

Follow @truchargv on Instagram for more info!

UNFOLDED POETRY

So unfolded poetry project really is a specific service action. It is really and truly our mission to enable writers, thinkers, feelers artists to listen, right, and speak. It's a three-fold project because they're in all aspects of life, especially an artistry needs to be balances and explorations.

Listen by Sitting in spaces with like-minded thinkers or people who don't think similarly to you whatsoever. Listen because this helps create intrinsic questioning. Do I believe with what they believe, what they're saying? If I do why, if I don't, why not? If it is, why not, what do I believe in?

Why is it different? We should consistently and constantly be questioning ourselves. So sometimes these questions can lead us further from ourselves or closer to ourselves. These are all fantastic things, especially for an artist for a writer. That's balance. Now, That creates stirring that creates thought processes, that may be more comfortable with or maybe uncomfortable with the next thing is to understand it to reflect it.

Write. Write. It all down. If it's who, what, where, when, why, how, and yet so important sit down write about it and it doesn't need to be a fluid action. It needs to be Uh, just raw authenticity

unfiltered. Thought processes just being translated from your mind to your heart. Now through a pencil onto paper, and it's captured. That's something that's really terrifying.

Sometimes is once you come and see something you wrote it, right? So you created it. It's an existence. And now there's this you have to confront it, you have to contend with it, sit with it, understand it. And that's where Poem starts. Poem starts. From the listening. Now, put into writing.

Edit it. Turn it into statements. Turn it into continued dialogue because that's a poetry really is I could hear your work and be like, huh, and I could respond to it in my own writing or i can elaborate on it with my own writing. So really what we are is we're capturing the humanity that we are experiencing in the presence.

We are only almost memorializing some of the past experiences that are perhaps not what we want to have featured on the wall then we don't necessarily want that to be showcased, but still important to our current character. Um, And then once we have that, we have statements, we have truth, we have um, person We can speak it now.

Why? Because we questioned it, we reflected it and now we can really give it life and let it be testimony. It's like when you say something and it's not so profound or meaningful to you, but you see somebody else's eyes light up and be like, I understand that I relate to that.

I've been through that too. And there's like a commiseration. That happens there. There's a human connection and that's what happens. In communities. But really, what that does is that reinforces my person now? Maybe now I'm encouraged to continue to explore my own character. My own, um, Experience that maybe made no sense in that present moment, but now, some truth comes to fruition.

So, Unfold its goal. Truly is to inspire you to lead you through guided activities through our workshops. The poems, through our monthly poetry challenges. And, Now, moving forward. Um, Our topic talks. And, Our continued open mics. Because that's how we practice who we are because we're the only person who could represent you and yes there are people who are like you similar to you care about the same things as you but there is no one else. Like you and if i say something or if avi or Sonalim (Unfolded board members) on, well, pause or say something, We create different connections to different types of people because no one person could reach everyone and diversity.

So important, especially in poetry and in writing and in the presentation of it and that's where, um, speak truly comes in. Folded poetry project encourages you to practice your written and spoken voice. Because now, in any space, whether creative professional or personal, you will be able to In a healthy constructive way, in a way that can create impact, communicate, your self, and represent yourself in a way that makes all the difference and that is truly what we are trying to hone in ourselves in one another and in every workshoper who comes to our Events and engages with us.

Whether it's in person or online.

Email - unfoldedpoetryproject@gmail.com

Instagram: [@unfoldedpoetryproject](https://www.instagram.com/unfoldedpoetryproject)

ENTRE

ENTRE is a community film center and regional archive that focuses on the creation, exhibition, and preservation of community-made cinema, documentary, and video art. Located in the borderlands of the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, ENTRE's mission is to provide access, knowledge, and skills in the realm of filmmaking, inviting more voices to document, share and archive the vast narrative of US/Mexico border communities. As an archive, ENTRE focuses on the collection and preservation of home movies and oral histories from the region, crucial components that provide insight into our collective past through the archiving of time, place, and history. ENTRE was co-founded in 2021 by artists C. Díaz and Andres Sanchez, both Valley natives with professional experience in film and video production and moving image archival and preservation.

ENTRE offers free and low-cost workshops, screenings and other educational programming for all ages. You can learn more about ENTRE's offerings at www.entrefilmcenter.org.

IG: @entrefilmcenter

CACTUS VALLEY

Cactus Valley Art is happy to have found their home in the Historic Downtown District of Harlingen, Texas. We're a small independently owned art supply store. Our mission is to make art accessible to all by holding space, providing opportunity, and sourcing materials for our community in the RGV.

We hold space through our various classes and workshops which allows people to come together, having meaningful conversations and make connections with each other.

We provide opportunity through partnering with artists in the community to host a class or throw an event. As well as providing people with the opportunity to show their work in our gallery space.

We source materials that our community is directly asking for such as clay and ceramic supplies. We put a huge importance in carrying brands that meet our standards both in quality of product as well as brands we are proud to stand behind ethically. We carry several brands that come from small businesses across the USA, many of which are Woman Owned, POC Owned, or LGBTQIA+ Owned.

Follow @cactusvalleyart on instagram for more info!

CHAPTER 6: LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

40



Life after college can be daunting to anyone. “Where am I going to work?” is a question that haunts most college students throughout their last year of college. For undocumented students, this question is a recurring guest star in our brains. Life after college is probably something you have been thinking about lately, way before starting college. That’s because you know your immigration status prevents you from accessing the workforce in the same way as your peers. Unlike your peers, you face legal restrictions that limit your access to certain opportunities. Let me answer the question that you’re probably still curious about:

DOES AN UNDOCUMENTED PERSON HAVE WORK AUTHORIZATION? No.

CAN AN UNDOCUMENTED PERSON WORK? Absolutely!

NOW, LET’S GET INTO THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING LIFE AFTER COLLEGE.

FAQ

WILL I BE ABLE TO GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE IF I AM UNDOCUMENTED?

Yes, you will be able to graduate from college as an undocumented student. Your immigration status should not prevent you from receiving your diploma and attending your graduation ceremony. You will get your physical degree in the mail about a month after your graduation so make sure your full legal name is on that paper. You never know if at any point in your life you can use your degree in your home country.

CAN I PURSUE FURTHER EDUCATION, SUCH AS GRADUATE SCHOOL?

Yes, you can pursue further education such as graduate school. Graduate school may be more difficult to finance than your undergraduate studies. However, there are scholarships, fellowships, and loans available.

WILL I BE ELIGIBLE FOR IMMIGRATION RELIEF IF I GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE?

Graduating from college does not guarantee you immigration relief. Every immigration case is different. Therefore, it is important you consult with an immigration lawyer on your particular case.

CAN I PURSUE A CAREER IN MY FIELD OF STUDY WITHOUT A SSN?

It truly depends on your field of study. There are fields of study that lend themselves to be able to build a freelance career such as Graphic Design and Computer Science. On the other hand, you will not be able to pursue a career in fields of study that require you to take a state exam such as Teaching and Nursing due to needing a SSN. Make sure to take this into consideration when choosing your major.

ARE THERE ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP OR SELF-EMPLOYMENT THAT DON'T REQUIRE EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION?

Yes! Alternative pathways to entrepreneurship as an undocumented person include freelancing and independent contractorship. These are great ways to start your own business and be your own boss. In fact, with an ITIN, you can start your own Limited Liability Company (LLC).

YOU CAN TAKE A LOOK AT IMMIGRANTS RISING'S "LIFE AFTER COLLEGE" GUIDE, WHICH DISCUSSES ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT IN MORE DETAIL. [HTTPS://IMMIGRANTSISING.ORG/](https://immigrantsrising.org/)

HOW DO I HANDLE QUESTIONS ABOUT MY IMMIGRATION STATUS DURING JOB INTERVIEWS?

It's important to remain honest while also protecting your privacy when answering questions about your immigration status. You can provide the necessary information without going into unnecessary details.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS DON'T HESITATE TO REACH OUT TO US AT LUPE. WE CAN DISCUSS YOUR OPTIONS TOGETHER.

CHAPTER 7: CREATE CHANGE



Getting involved in your community can be a powerful way to advocate for yourself and others, especially as an undocumented student. By joining forces with like-minded people and organizations, you can amplify your voice, create change and meet people going through similar experiences. Not sure where to begin? That's okay. You can follow the steps listed below.

STEPS TO GETTING INVOLVED

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR PASSIONS & INTERESTS

Reflect on what issues matter most to you. Is it college access? Immigration? Healthcare? Identifying the issues that inspire you to take action will lead you to organizations or causes that align with your values.

STEP 2: RESEARCH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Look for local organizations, advocacy groups, clubs and nonprofits that focus on the issues you care about. These organizations will most likely provide support, resources, and opportunities for activism. Reach out to them to learn more about their work and how you can get involved.

BELOW YOU WILL FIND A LIST OF A FEW ORGANIZATIONS IN THE RGV:

La Unión del Pueblo Entero (LUPE)

Instagram: @lupe_rgv

LUPE Votes

Instagram: @lupevotes

LUPE Youth

Instagram: @lupe_youth

Casa Orgullo

Instagram: @casaorgullorgv

South Texas Equality Project

Instagram: @southtexasequalityproject

Texas Rising at UTRGV

Instagram: @texasrisingrgv

Planned Parenthood South Texas

Instagram: @ppsouthtexas

Frontera Fund

Instagram: @fronterafundrgv

STEP 3: ATTEND EVENTS AND MEETINGS

All of the organizations listed above host events, workshops, and meetings where you can learn, network, and take action. Attend these meetings to connect with fellow activists, hear from speakers, and stay up to date on current issues.

STEP 4: VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME & SKILLS

Offer to volunteer with the organizations of your choice to support their initiatives. From assisting with their event planning to outreach efforts, your contributions can make a difference.

STEP 5: ORGANIZE & MOBILIZE

Take initiative to organize events, campaigns, or initiatives that address the needs of your community. Mobilize your peers to work towards common goals and create change.

By getting involved in your community and advocating for change, you can empower yourself and pave the way for a brighter future for undocumented youth and their families. Plus, you might make some life-long friends along the way.

APPENDIX A

RESIDENCY AFFIDAVIT

SOME OF THESE APPENDICES ARE UPDATED ON A YEARLY BASIS. PLEASE VISIT EACH WEBSITE FOR THE MOST CURRENT VERSIONS.

- **RGV FOCUS TOOLKIT:**

Adopted January 2012

Figure: 19 TAC §21.25(c)

Chart I

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS

§

§

COUNTY OF _____ §

Before me, the undersigned Notary Public, on this day personally appeared _____,
known to me, who being by me duly sworn upon his/her oath, deposed and said:

1. My name is _____. I am _____ years of age. I have personal knowledge of the facts stated herein and they are all true and correct.
2. I graduated or will graduate from a Texas high school or received my GED certificate in Texas.
3. I resided in Texas for thirty-six months leading up to graduation from high school or receiving my GED certificate.
4. I have resided or will have resided in Texas for the 12 months immediately preceding the census date of the semester in which I will enroll in _____ (college/university).
5. I have filed or will file an application to become a permanent resident of the United States as soon as I am eligible to do so.

In witness whereof, this _____ day of _____, _____.

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Student I.D.#)

(Student Date of Birth)

SUBSCRIBED TO AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME, on the _____ day of _____,

_____, _____, to certify which witness my hand and official seal.

_____, Notary Public in and for the State of Texas



Affidavit of Residency

Senate Bill 1528 (Formerly HB 1403)

NAME: _____ DOB : ____ - ____ - ____ SSN: _____
(Please print)

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE Home: (____) ____ - ____
(Street) (Permanent) _____
(City) (State) (Zip Code) Work: (____) ____ - ____

E-MAIL: _____
Cell: (____) ____ - ____

Oath and Information Certification

1. I am _____ years of age and certify that the information of the affidavit is complete and correct, and I understand that submission of false information is grounds for rejection of my application, withdrawal of any offer acceptance, cancellation of admissions and registration, or appropriate disciplinary action.
2. I graduated or will graduate from a Texas high school or received my GED certificate in Texas.
3. I resided in Texas for the past three years prior to graduation or receipt of GED.
4. I have resided or will have resided in Texas for the past 12 months prior to the census date of the semester in which I will enroll.
5. I have filed or will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity that I am eligible to do so.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

State of _____ County of _____

This instrument was acknowledged before me on _____, 20____, by _____
Name(s) of person(s) acknowledging

Signature of Notary Public

Type Name of Notary Public

My commission expires _____ 20____.

[illegible]

AFFIDAVIT

BEFORE ME, THE UNDERSIGNED NOTARY PUBLIC, on this day personally appeared _____, known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument and who, being by me duly sworn upon his/her oath, deposed and stated, as follows:

- “My name is _____. I am _____ years of age and fully competent to make this *Affidavit*. I have personal knowledge of the information contained herein, and it is true and correct.
- I graduated or will graduate from a Texas high school, or I received or will receive my GED certificate in Texas.
- I resided in Texas for three years leading up to graduation from high school or receiving my GED certificate.
- I have resided or will have resided in Texas for 12 months prior to the census date of the semester in which I will enroll at South Texas College.
- I have filed or will file an *Application for Permanent Residency* at the earliest opportunity that I am eligible to do so.”

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, SIGNED IN _____, Texas on this the _____ day of _____, 20__.

Student Signature

DOB/SID

Printed Name

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME, the undersigned Notary Public, on this the _____ day of _____, 20__, to certify which, witness my hand and official seal of office.

[Stamp and Seal of Office]

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF TEXAS

§

COUNTY OF _____

§

§

Before me, the undersigned Notary Public, on this day personally appeared _____, known to me, who being by me duly sworn upon his/her oath, deposed and said:

1. My name is _____. I am _____ years of age. I have personal knowledge of the facts stated herein and they are all true and correct.
2. I graduated or will graduate from a Texas high school or received my GED certificate in Texas.
3. I resided in Texas for thirty-six months leading up to graduation from high school or receiving my GED certificate.
4. I have resided or will have resided in Texas for the 12 months immediately preceding the census date of the semester in which I will enroll at **The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**.
5. I have filed or will file an application to become a permanent resident of the United States as soon as I am eligible to do so.

In witness whereof, this _____ day of _____, _____.

(Student Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Student ID #)

(Student Date of Birth)

SUBSCRIBED TO AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME, on this _____ day of _____, _____, to certify which witness my hand and official seal.

Notary Public in and for the State of Texas

APPENDIX B

NON-TAX FILER FORM

- **UTRGV:**

Fall 2023
Spring 2024
Summer 2024

The University of Texas
Rio Grande Valley

2023-2024
Academic Year

2023-2024 INCOME INFORMATION FOR NON-TAX FILERS (Student's Income)

STXS24

Student First Name: _____ Student Last Name: _____

ID: _____ D.O.B.: _____

_____ and _____ am/are writing this
(Student) (Spouse, if applicable)

letter to confirm that I/we did not and are not required to file an income tax return for the 2021 year. I/we worked and earned wages in the amount of

\$_____ and \$_____ for a total
(Student's wages) (Spouse's wages, if applicable)

combined wages of \$_____ from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

I/we understand that we may be required to file if it is mandated according to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. If you need additional information, please contact us at _____.

Sincerely,

(Student's Signature)

(Spouse's signature, if applicable)

Submitting documents. *You may submit your documents in several ways:*

- Email to: tasfa@utrgv.edu
- By mail to: **UTRGV U Central**, Visitors Center 1.113, 1201 W. University Drive, Edinburg, TX 78539
- Physical Drop off to locations listed below:

Brownsville U Central Location:
The Tower, Main 1.100
One West University Blvd.
Brownsville, Texas 78520
Ph: (888) 882-4026

Edinburg U Central Location:
Student Services Bldg., First Floor
1201 West University Drive
Edinburg, Texas 78539
Ph: (888) 882-4026

• **STC:**



Income Statement for Non-Tax Filers 2023-2024

Individuals who do **NOT** have a Social Security Number, an Individual Taxpayer ID or an Employer ID Number and did not file an income tax return must fill out this form.

STC ID: A _____ Student Name: _____

Select one option below:

☐ I/We _____ and/or _____ do not have a social security
Parent 1/Student Parent 2/Spouse

number, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or an Employer Identification Number. I/We did not file an income tax return in 2021, nor did I/we file with a spouse because I/we do not have a SSN. I/We worked in _____ from _____ to _____
(city and state) (month) (month)

The total I/We earned in 2021 was \$_____.

☐ I/We _____ and/or _____ do not have a social security
Name of non-tax filer Name of non-tax filer

number, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or an Employer Identification Number. I/We did not file an income tax return in 2021, nor did I/we file with a spouse. I/we did not work in 2021. I/We received the following sources of untaxed income in 2021.

List sources of untaxed income (if any):

Source of Untaxed Income	Amount
	\$
	\$

Please sign below:

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent 1 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent 2 Signature: _____ Date: _____

Revised 11-23-2022

APPENDIX C

- **Confirmation of Eligibility Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG) and Texas Grant form:** <https://reportcenter.highered.texas.gov/agency-publication/guidelines-manuals/teog-fy-2023-guidelines/>
-

STUDENT RESOURCES

- RGV FOCUS' Resource Guide for College Access: Advising DREAMERS in the RGV
- Immigrants Rising Life After College Guide
- United We Dream Student Guidebook
- New York State Youth Leadership Council
- The Road to College: A College Guide for New York Immigrant Students by New York State Youth Leadership Council
- Big Future - College Board- What's the True Cost of Attendance? Know Before You Go
- ACLU's Know Your Rights "Immigrants' Rights"
- The Best Schools - From Associate to Doctorate: A Complete Guide to College Degree Levels

GLOSSARY

- **Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA):** People that came to the United States as children that meet certain criteria may request consideration of deferred action for a period of 2 years. They are also eligible for a work authorization.
- **Undocumented:** Immigrants who resign in the U.S. without a legal immigration status.
- **Immigrant:** A person who moves to another country with the intention of resigning there.
- **Immigration Status:** Refers to the way in which a person is present in the U.S.
- **DREAMers:** Immigrant youth who were brought to the U.S. when they were minors. This term originated from the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. Some DREAMers today have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Others remain undocumented.
- **Legislation:** The preparation and passing of laws by a legislative body through its lawmaking process.
- **Texas Resident:** Residence refers to where you live. For admissions & financial aid purposes, an undocumented student becomes a Texas resident through the requirements of the Texas DREAM Act.
- **GED:** Stands for General Educational Development Test. The GED credential is equivalent to a high school diploma.
- **Notarized Affidavit:** A document in which a person swears that the information they provided is true and correct. The affidavit gets notarized by a notary public.
- **Notice of Action:** An official communication sent to an individual to inform them of a decision or progress on their immigration case.
- **In-state Tuition:** The amount charged to students that attend a college within their state of residence.
- **Out of State Tuition:** The amount charged to students that attend a college outside of their state of residence.
- **State Financial Aid:** Monetary assistance provided by state governments to help its residents pay for higher education. This financial aid comes in different forms such as grants, scholarships, loans. Perhaps the most common is the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA).
- **Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA):** A form used by non-citizen Texas residents to apply for state financial aid for higher education.
- **Institution:** An organization founded for educational purposes. A college or university.
- **Degree:** What your chosen university will give you upon completion of a program of study.
- **Privately Funded:** Refers to financial support or resources provided by non-governmental sources.
- **Tuition:** The amount you owe to attend college for classes and instruction.
- **Privilege:** Special advantage or right possessed by someone.
- **Social Security Number:** A number assigned to specific individuals in the United States used to track social security benefits and other identification purposes.
- **Falfurrias Checkpoint:** A U.S. Border Patrol station located in Brooks

County, Texas approximately 70 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border.

- **Misinformation:** False or inaccurate information that is spread.
- **Standardized Tests:** Exams administered and scored in a consistent manner across all test-takers to assess and compare the performance of individuals.
- **ApplyTexas:** An online application platform used by students to apply to public universities and colleges in Texas.
- **International Student:** Non-immigrant visitors who come to the U.S. temporarily to attend college information and develop professional or social contacts.
- **Residency Affidavit:** A sworn statement verifying a person's residency status, it is required to establish eligibility for in-state tuition.
- **First Generation:** Individuals who are the first in their family to attend and graduate from college.
- **Networking:** Building and maintaining professional relationships to exchange information, resources, and opportunities.
- **Non-profit Organizations:** Entities that operate for charitable, educational, or social purposes rather than profit.
- **Internships:** Temporary work experiences provided to students or recent graduates, offering practical training and exposure to a particular industry.
- **Mentor:** An experienced and trusted advisor that provides guidance, support, and knowledge to someone less experienced.
- **Assistantships:** A form of financial aid open to graduate students in which a student assists a professor.
- **Fellowship:** A training program in which individuals perform research and develop skills to apply in a professional setting
- **Freelance:** Working for different companies, people, organizations rather than being employed by one entity.
- **Contract Work:** An independent contractor is hired for a specific project or certain time period for a set fee.
- **Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN):** A tax processing number issued by the International Revenue Service (IRS) to individuals who do not have a Social Security Number but are required to pay taxes.
- **CommonApplication:** An online platform that allows students to apply to multiple colleges and universities using a single application. This includes schools outside of Texas.
- **Personal Email:** An email address associated with someone's personal identity. Definitely to an email provided by a school or work place.
- **LUPE Membership:** An annual membership that gives you access to our low-cost or free services and our local neighborhood leadership development programs. Our members decide our priorities and lead our campaigns. The membership, which includes a photo ID, is \$40 per individual, or \$60 per couple, and \$20 for students.

Included with membership Free: First consultation, English & Citizenship classes, and an accidental death benefit of \$4000.

Included at affordable prices: Income Tax filing preparation, acquiring an ITIN, immigration cases, and translation of official documents.

- **Major:** An area of study chosen by a student as their primary focus during their college or university education.
- **Degree Plan:** An outline of roadmap that outlines the courses and

requirements a student must complete in order to graduate/earn a degree.

- **Career:** A person's chosen occupation or profession.
- **Federal Financial Aid:** Monetary assistance provided by the U.S. government to help students pay for their higher education. This includes grants, loans, and work-study programs.
- **Non-citizens:** Individuals who reside in a country but do not possess citizenship of that country, often referred to as residents or immigrants.
- **Assigned Male at Birth:** Refers to the designation given to an individual's sex at the time of their birth based on physical characteristics.
- **Dependent:** A person, usually a child or family member, who relies on another person for financial support and is claimed as such on tax returns.
- **Confirmation of Eligibility Texas Educational Opportunity Grant & Texas Grant:** A verification process conducted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to determine the eligibility of students for these state-funded financial aid programs.
- **Work Authorization:** Official permission by a government that allows a person to legally work within a specific jurisdiction.

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. The word "NOTES" is printed at the top center in a large, bold, black font. There are 21 horizontal lines in total, providing space for writing.



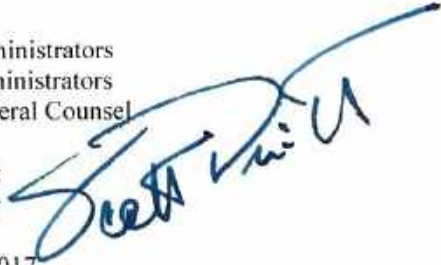
EXHIBIT 7

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



E. SCOTT PRUITT
ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Assistant Administrators
Regional Administrators
Office of General Counsel

FROM: E. Scott Pruitt
Administrator 

DATE: October 16, 2017

SUBJECT: Adhering to the Fundamental Principles of Due Process, Rule of Law, and Cooperative Federalism in Consent Decrees and Settlement Agreements

In the past, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has sought to resolve litigation through consent decrees and settlement agreements that appear to be the result of collusion with outside groups.¹ Behind closed doors, EPA and the outside groups agreed that EPA would take an action with a certain end in mind, relinquishing some of its discretion over the Agency's priorities and duties and handing them over to special interests and the courts.² When negotiating these agreements, EPA excluded intervenors, interested stakeholders, and affected states from those discussions. Some of these agreements even reduced Congress's ability to influence policy.³ The days of this regulation through litigation are terminated.

"Sue and settle," as this tactic has been called, undermines the fundamental principles of government that I outlined on my first day: (1) the importance of process, (2) adherence to the rule of law, and (3) the applicability of cooperative federalism. The process by which EPA adopts regulations sends an important message to the public: EPA values the comments that it receives from the public and strives to make informed decisions on regulations that impact the lives and livelihoods of the American people. The rule of law requires EPA to act only within the confines of the statutory authority that Congress has conferred to the Agency, and thereby avoid the uncertainty of litigation and ultimately achieve better outcomes.

¹ When litigants enter into a consent decree, they agree to resolve the litigation through a judicially enforceable court order; if one party fails to abide by the terms of a consent decree, that party risks being held in contempt of court. A settlement agreement generally resolves legal disputes without a court order; if one party fails to abide by the terms of a settlement agreement, the aggrieved party must petition a court for a judicial remedy.

² These outside groups often file lawsuits in federal district courts that the litigants believe will give them the best chance of prevailing – not necessarily in the forum where the agency action at issue is most applicable – and ask the court to enjoin the agency action on a nationwide basis. Nationwide injunctions, in general, raise serious concerns about the validity and propriety of these district court actions.

³ The sue-and-settle phenomenon results in part from statutes that empower these outside groups to file a lawsuit against a federal agency when that agency fails to meet a statutory deadline and then reward these individuals by allowing them to recover attorney's fees for "successful" lawsuits.



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ADMINISTRATOR

Finally, EPA must honor the vital role of the states in protecting the public health and welfare under the principle of cooperative federalism as prescribed by the Constitution and statutory mandate.

* * *

This memorandum explains the sue-and-settle directive that I established within the Agency and also describes how the past practice of regulation through litigation has harmed the American public.

Regulation Through Litigation Violates Due Process, the Rule of Law, and Cooperative Federalism

When an agency promulgates a new regulation or issues a decision, the agency should take that action consistent with the processes and substantive authority that the law permits. An agency, therefore, should ordinarily zealously defend its action when facing a lawsuit challenging that action. If an agency agrees to resolve that litigation through a consent decree or settlement agreement, however, questions will necessarily arise about the propriety of the government's determination not to defend the underlying regulation or decision. Indeed, sue and settle has been adopted to resolve lawsuits through consent decrees in a way that bound the agency to judicially enforceable actions and timelines that curtailed careful agency consideration. This violates due process, the rule of law, and cooperative federalism.

A. The Importance of Process

EPA risks bypassing the transparency and due process safeguards enshrined in the Administrative Procedure Act⁴ and other statutes⁵ when it uses a consent decree or a settlement agreement to bind the Agency to proceed with a rulemaking with a certain end in mind on a schedule negotiated with the litigants. Congress enacted the Administrative Procedure Act to provide the American public with notice of a potential agency action, to encourage public participation in the rulemaking process, and to afford federal agencies with the framework to perform careful consideration of all the associated issues before taking final agency action. Following the legal processes for agency action provides predictability for all stakeholders, ensures that the agency will receive input from all interested parties, and increases the defensibility of an action when facing a procedural challenge.

⁴ Pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, an agency must publish a general notice of proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register and include the following information: "(1) a statement of the time, place, and nature of public rulemaking proceedings; (2) reference to the legal authority under which the rule is proposed; and (3) either the terms or substance of the proposed rule or a description of the subjects and issues involved." 5 U.S.C. § 553(b). Additionally, the agency "shall give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rulemaking through a submission of written data, views, or arguments with or without opportunity for oral presentation." *Id.* § 553(c).

⁵ The statutes include the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. § 3506), the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. § 603), and the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (2 U.S.C. § 1535).



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ADMINISTRATOR

A sue-and-settle agreement, however, undermines these safeguards. Using this tactic, the agency and the party that filed the legal challenge agree in principle on the terms of a consent decree or settlement before the public has the opportunity to review the terms of the agreement.⁶ An agency can also use consent decrees and settlement agreements as an end-run around certain procedural protections of the rulemaking process. Even when an agency attempts to comply with these procedural safeguards, the agency typically agrees to an expedited rulemaking process that can inhibit meaningful public participation. This rushed rulemaking process can lead to technical errors by the agency, insufficient time for stakeholders to submit rigorous studies that assess the proposal, the inability of the agency to provide meaningful consideration of all the evidence submitted to the agency, a lack of time for the agency to reconsider its initial proposal and issue a revised version, and the failure to take into account the full range of potential issues related to the proposed rule.

Sue and settle, therefore, interferes with the rights of the American people to provide their views on proposed regulatory decisions and have the agency thoughtfully consider those views before making a final decision. By using sue and settle to avoid the normal rulemaking processes and protections, an agency empowers special-interests at the expense of the public and parties that could have used their powers of persuasion to convince the agency to take an alternative action that could better serve the American people.⁷

B. Adherence to the Rule of Law

As an agency in the executive branch of the United States, EPA must faithfully administer the laws of the land and take actions that are tethered to the governing statutes. The authority that Congress has granted to EPA is our *only* authority. EPA must respect the rule of law. The Agency must strive to meet the directives and deadlines that Congress set forth in our governing environmental statutes. But we must not

⁶ In certain circumstances, the Agency must permit the public to comment on the proposed settlement. See, e.g., Clean Air Act Section 113(g), 42 U.S.C. § 7413(g) (requiring that “[a]t least 30 days before a consent decree or settlement agreement of any kind under [the Clean Air Act] to which the United States is a party (other than enforcement actions) . . . is final or filed with a court, the Administrator shall provide a reasonable opportunity by notice in the *Federal Register* to persons who are not named as parties or intervenors to the action or matter to comment in writing”). While the Agency has made changes to proposed consent decrees in response to comments receiving during this process, the Agency understands that numerous stakeholders lack faith in the effectiveness of this comment opportunity because the Agency and the settling litigants have already agreed in principle to the proposed settlement.

⁷ “The greatest evil of government by consent decree . . . comes from its potential to freeze the regulatory processes of representative democracy. At best, even with the most principled and fair-minded courts, the device adds friction. . . . As a policy device, then, government by consent decree serves no necessary end. It opens the door to unforeseeable mischief; it degrades the institutions of representative democracy and augments the power of special interest groups. It does all of this in a society that hardly needs new devices that emasculate representative democracy and strengthen the power of special interests.” *Citizens for a Better Env’t v. Gorsuch*, 718 F.2d 1117, 1136-37 (D.C. Cir. 1983) (Wilkey, J., dissenting).



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ADMINISTRATOR

surrender the powers that we receive from Congress to another branch of government – lest we risk upsetting the balance of powers that our founders enshrined in the Constitution.⁸ Sue and settle disrespects the rule of law and improperly elevates the powers of the federal judiciary to the detriment of the executive and legislative branches.⁹

In the past, outside groups have sued EPA for failing to act by a deadline prescribed under the law. EPA would then sign a consent decree agreeing to take a particular action ahead of other Agency actions that the public and other public officials considered to be higher priorities. We should not readily cede our authority and discretion by letting the federal judiciary dictate the priorities of the Administration and the Agency.

Taken to its extreme, the sue-and-settle strategy can allow executive branch officials to avoid political accountability by voluntarily yielding their discretionary authority to the courts, thereby insulating agency

⁸ In The Federalist Number 47, James Madison wrote:

One of the principal objections inculcated by the more respectable adversaries to the constitution, is its supposed violation of the political maxim, that the legislative, executive and judiciary departments ought to be separate and distinct. In the structure of the federal government, no regard, it is said, seems to have been paid to this essential precaution in favor of liberty. The several departments of power are distributed and blended in such a manner, as at once to destroy all symmetry and beauty of form; and to expose some of the essential parts of the edifice to the danger of being crushed by the disproportionate weight of other parts.

No political truth is certainly of greater intrinsic value or is stamped with the authority of more enlightened patrons of liberty than that on which the objection is founded. *The accumulation of all powers legislative, executive and judiciary in the same hands, whether of one, a few or many, and whether hereditary, self appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.* Were the federal constitution therefore really chargeable with this accumulation of power or with a mixture of powers having a dangerous tendency to such an accumulation, no further arguments would be necessary to inspire a universal reprobation of the system. I persuade myself however, that it will be made apparent to every one, that the charge cannot be supported, and that the maxim on which it relies, has been totally misconceived and misapplied. *In order to form correct ideas on this important subject, it will be proper to investigate the sense, in which the preservation of liberty requires, that the three great departments of power should be separate and distinct.*

The Federalist No. 47 (James Madison) (emphasis added).

⁹ “*The leading principle of our Constitution is the independence of the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary of each other.*” Thomas Jefferson to George Hay, 1807. FE 9:59 (emphasis added). “*The Constitution intended that the three great branches of the government should be co-ordinate and independent of each other. As to acts, therefore, which are to be done by either, it has given no control to another branch. . . . Where different branches have to act in their respective lines, finally and without appeal, under any law, they may give to it different and opposite constructions. . . . From these different constructions of the same act by different branches, less mischief arises than from giving to any one of them a control over the others.*” Thomas Jefferson to George Hay, 1807. ME 11:213 (emphasis added).



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ADMINISTRATOR

officials from criticisms of unpopular actions. Equally troubling, sue and settle can deprive Congress of its ability to influence agency policy through oversight and the power of the purse. Sue-and-settle agreements can also prevent subsequent administrations from modifying a particular policy priority, approach, or timeline.¹⁰ The founders of our nation did not envision such an imbalance of power among the federal branches of government.

EPA must always respect the rule of law and defend the prerogatives of its separate powers. EPA, therefore, shall avoid inappropriately limiting the discretion that Congress authorized the Agency, abide by the procedural safeguards enumerated in the law, and resist the temptation to reduce the amount of time necessary for careful Agency action.

C. Embracing Cooperative Federalism

Many environmental statutes empower the states to serve as stewards of their lands and environments.¹¹ Embracing federalism, EPA can work cooperatively with states to encourage regulations instead of compelling them and to respect the separation of powers.¹² Past sue-and-settle tactics, however, undermined this principle of cooperative federalism by excluding the states from meaningfully participating in procedural and substantive Agency actions.

When considering a consent decree or settlement agreement to end litigation against the Agency, EPA should welcome the participation of the affected states and tribes, regulated communities, and other interested stakeholders. This should include engagement even before lodging the decree or agreement, where appropriate. These additional participants to the negotiations can voice their concerns that the

¹⁰ “The separation of powers inside a government – and each official’s concern that he may be replaced by someone with a different agenda – creates incentives to use the judicial process to obtain an advantage. The consent decree is an important element in the strategy. . . . It is impossible for an agency to promulgate a regulation containing a clause such as ‘My successor cannot amend this regulation.’ But if the clause appears in a consent decree, perhaps the administrator gets his wish to dictate the policies of his successor.” Frank Easterbrook, *Justice and Contract in Consent Judgments*, 1987 U. Chi. L. Forum 19, 33-34 (1987).

¹¹ Both the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act contain specific provisions that enlist the states to take primary responsibility of environmental protection.

¹² In Federalist Number 51, James Madison wrote:

In the compound republic of America, the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and then the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments. Hence a double security arises to the rights of the people. The different governments will control each other, at the same time that each will be controlled by itself. Second. It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure.

The Federalist No. 51 (James Madison) (emphasis added).



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ADMINISTRATOR

agreed-upon deadlines will be reasonable and fair, permitting adequate time for meaningful public participation and thoughtful Agency consideration of comments received. EPA must also seek to collaborate with the states and remain flexible when ensuring compliance with environmental protections.

Conclusion

By emphasizing the importance of process, adhering to the rule of law, and embracing cooperative federalism, EPA increases the quality of, and public confidence in, its regulations. Through transparency and public participation, EPA can reassure the American public that the rules that apply to them have been deliberated upon and determined in a forum open to all. Finally, the federal government must continue to improve engagement with the states, tribes, interested stakeholders, and regulated communities, especially when resolving litigation. The steps outlined in my directive today will help us achieve these noble goals and continue to improve us as an Agency.

EXHIBIT 8



TEXAS DREAM ACT REPORT

May 2023

INTRO

Then-Governor Rick Perry signed House Bill 1403, commonly known as the Texas Dream Act, on June 16, 2001. Since then, Texas has guaranteed access to in-state tuition and financial aid at our state's public universities to young Texas residents who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents but graduated from a Texas high school. Maintaining this pathway to opportunity created by the legislature more than twenty years ago provides for our continued prosperity as a diverse and productive state.

➤➤ WHAT IS THE TEXAS DREAM ACT?

Texas was the first state to pass a Dream Act. As of this year, 19 states have followed Texas' leadership and passed similar common-sense measures. Arizona, one of two states that explicitly denied in-state tuition to undocumented residents after the Texas law, is the most recent addition to the list after voters approved a constitutional amendment in 2022 reversing the 2006 restriction. The 2001 Texas Dream Act extends in-state tuition and grant eligibility to non-citizen residents of the state. In-state tuition at colleges and universities is often significantly lower than the rates out-of-state students pay.¹ The legislation includes both students who are documented (e.g. visa holders) and students who are undocumented—including recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.²

In-state tuition and state financial aid programs are available to residents of Texas. A student that is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident is a resident of Texas for higher education purposes if they can demonstrate they meet all of the following criteria:

- ✓ They lived in Texas during the three years before graduating from high school or receiving a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency; and
- ✓ They lived in Texas the full year before the enrollment cutoff at a Texas public college or university; and
- ✓ They sign an affidavit declaring their intention to apply for lawful permanent resident status as soon as they are able. (This is why the Higher Education Coordinating Board refers to students in this program as "affidavit students" in official reporting.)

➤➤ HOW DOES IN-STATE TUITION AFFECT THE ABILITY OF U.S. CITIZENS AND PERMANENT RESIDENTS TO GET INTO TEXAS COLLEGES?

In-state tuition only applies to eligibility for tuition rates and does not affect admission decisions in any way.³ Non-citizen resident students go through the exact same admission process as all other prospective students and must be in good academic standing to earn admission to Texas colleges.

HOW MANY STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM THE TEXAS DREAM ACT?



In 2021, **20,137** students who signed an in-state tuition affidavit accounted for just **1.5%** of all students enrolled in Texas' public universities, community colleges, technical and state colleges, and health related institutions.

➤➤ HOW MANY TEXAS DREAM ACT STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID?

Access to financial aid is crucial for making higher education accessible and affordable for all Texas residents. Texas Dream Act students apply for and earn financial aid in the same manner as other Texas students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents.



TEXAS DREAM ACT REPORT

May 2023



A total of **\$579 million** was awarded through state-funded grant programs to **128,915** students attending Texas colleges and universities in 2021.⁴

Of that, only 3,539 Texas Dream Act students received state-supported grants – totaling **\$17.3 million** – less than three percent of the total amount disbursed.⁵ In 2021, Texas Dream Act students represented less than five percent of all Texas students who received any form of financial aid (including grants, loans, state-sponsored work-study, and institutional aid).

The amount of tuition paid by Texas Dream Act students far out-weighs the amount received in financial aid. Texas Dream Act students paid **\$81.6 million in tuition and fees in fiscal year 2021**.



When compared to the **\$10.6 million** awarded in financial aid, the state and public institutions of higher education saw a benefit of **\$71 million**.

⇒ THE TEXAS DREAM ACT BENEFITS THE STATE ECONOMY

Texas needs all the educated and highly skilled workers it can get. There are currently two jobs for every working-age person in the state, but not every working-age person may have the training to fill the job. Increasing access to higher education with in-state tuition incentivizes high school graduation. It increases young undocumented Texans' earning potential while providing the Texas economy with a critical pipeline of skilled labor.

EXAMPLE

The average income of an immigrant who works full time in Texas with a Bachelor's degree or higher is **\$49,907 per year** compared to an immigrant with just a high school diploma or equivalent, who earns **\$20,689 per year**. Additional taxes paid by a Bachelor's degree holder compared to a high school graduate amounts to **\$2,151 more per person** added to state and local government revenue annually. For Texas Dream Act students in 2021, the potential extra tax benefit to state and local governments is **over \$43 million**.

The benefits do not just extend to those that have completed a Bachelor's degree. The average income of an immigrant in Texas with some **college experience is \$25,622 and \$28,776** with an Associate's degree. Additional taxes paid by immigrants residing in Texas with an Associate's degree amounts to **about \$447 per person** annually to state and local governments. Again, for Texas Dream Act Students in 2021, the potential added tax benefit to state and local governments is **\$9 million** for those who earned their Associate's degree.

⇒ SMART INVESTMENTS BENEFIT EVERY TEXAN

As Texas continues to attract highly skilled jobs, we need the workforce to fill those jobs. For two decades, extending in-state tuition to all Texans has created a consistent pipeline of motivated students who are now successful and essential members of our communities. The Texas Miracle state leaders enjoy touting was partly made possible by the realities first dreamed up with HB 1403 in 2001. Two decades later, any retreat from such a successful program would be a nightmare for our efforts to sustain the economic juggernaut Texas has experienced over that time.



TEXAS DREAM ACT REPORT

May 2023

REFERENCES

1. Tex. H.B. 1403, 77th Leg., R.S. (2001), <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlodocs/77R/billtext/html/HB01403F.htm>.
2. DACA, now under contest at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th circuit, provides two years of relief from deportation along with a work permit for those that were eligible, could afford to apply, and were approved.
3. See note 1.
4. Numbers from Student Financial Aid FY 2021 Report, Page 13. Using 3 most common state finaid grants available to affidavit students. i.e. TEOG, TEG & TEXAS Grants
5. See TX-Dream-Act-Students_2019-2021.xls; FY21 Affidavit Student Financial Aid_CD 2-8-23.xlsx

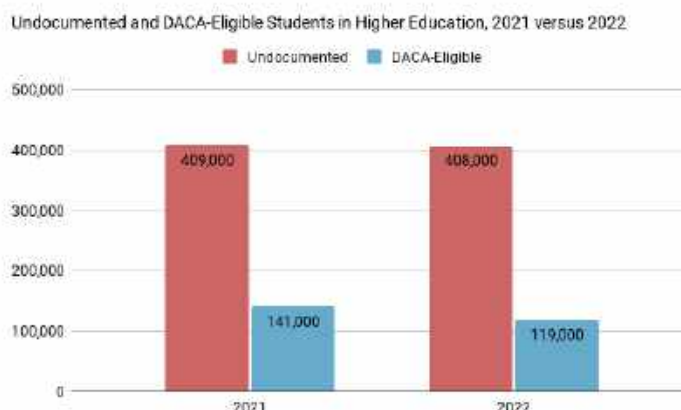
EXHIBIT 9

Undocumented Students in U.S. Higher Education

June 2024

There are approximately **408,000 undocumented students** enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education. The number of undocumented students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities has [remained roughly stable since 2021](#). However, the percentage of undocumented students who have DACA or who are DACA-eligible continues to decline, as [ongoing legal challenges](#) to the program, alongside the 2007 arrival cut-off, preclude new applicants from qualifying for the program. In 2021, there were 141,000 DACA-eligible students enrolled in higher education, accounting for approximately 0.7% of all enrolled college students. In 2022, the number of DACA-eligible students dropped to 119,000, approximately 0.65% of all college students.

While there are fewer DACA recipients in higher education, most undocumented students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities arrived in the country as young children (ages 0-9) or adolescents (ages 10-16) and attended primary and/or secondary school in the United States.



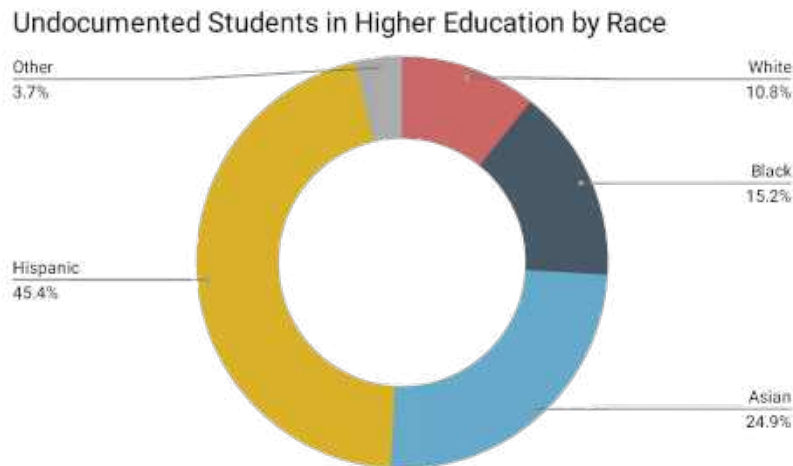
All DACA/DACA-eligible students arrived in the U.S. before the age of 16, with the vast majority – 89% – arriving by the age of 9.

Overall, about 71% of all undocumented students arrived in the U.S. before the age of 17.

Age of Arrival	Share of Undocumented Postsecondary Students	Share of DACA-Eligible Postsecondary Students
Child (0-9)	31.1%	89.0%
Adolescent (10-16)	39.8%	11.0%
Young Adult/Adult (17+)	29.1%	0.0%

Who are the Undocumented Students in Higher Education?

Undocumented students are a heterogeneous community, representing the broad range of immigrants in the U.S. They are enrolled in every kind of institution – including community colleges, private colleges and universities, and large state universities – and pursue a range of degree and credential programs.



Degrees and Programs

Approximately 88% of undocumented students are enrolled as undergraduates, and 12% are enrolled in graduate or professional schools. 7.4% of undocumented students pursuing graduate education hold an undergraduate degree in a STEM field. With their undergraduate and advanced degrees, these students are poised to fill critical positions in science, technology, and healthcare.

Undocumented Students in Higher Education by State

As with the overall undocumented population, undocumented students in higher education are concentrated in a small number of states. Three-quarters of undocumented students come from 12 states, and most of those hail from four states: California, Texas, Florida, and New York. But the spread of the undocumented student population across states is changing. California, Georgia, Florida, and New Jersey all saw increases in their undocumented student population between 2021 and 2022.

Top 5 States Enrolling Undocumented Students (2022):

- California (87,000)
- Texas (57,000)
- Florida (43,000)
- New York (27,000)
- New Jersey (21,000)

This report was based on data from the 1-year sample of the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS). Analysis was provided by the [American Immigration Council \(AIC\)](#). The Council strives to strengthen the United States by shaping immigration policies and practices through innovative programs, cutting-edge research, and strategic legal and advocacy efforts grounded in evidence, compassion, justice and fairness.

EXHIBIT 10

Fred Farias III, OD, MS, FAAO
CHAIR

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VICE CHAIR

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SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

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Ashlie A. Thomas
Welcome Wilson, Jr.
Daniel D. Wong

Wynn Rosser, PhD
COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER
EDUCATION

Memorandum

To: Presidents of Institutions of Higher Education

From: Wynn Rosser, PhD, Commissioner of Higher Education

Date: June 18, 2025

Subject: Memorandum Regarding Court Ruling

As institutions are likely aware, on June 4, 2025, a federal court enjoined the application of Texas Education Code §§ 54.051(m) and 54.052(a) to aliens who are unlawfully present. In order to ensure uniformity of application and compliance with the injunction and Texas Education Code 54.056(b), each institution must assess the population of students who have established eligibility for Texas resident tuition under Section 54.053(a)(3) who are not lawfully present and will therefore need to be reclassified as non-residents and charged non-resident tuition for the fall 2025 semester pursuant to the court order and Texas Education Code §§ 54.054 and 54.055.

Attached is the motion and final judgement.

- [Joint Motion for Entry of Consent.pdf](#)
- [In State Tuition Final Judgement.pdf](#)

EXHIBIT 11

**DECLARATION OF TANIA CHAVEZ
LA UNIÓN DEL PUEBLO ENTERO (LUPE)**

I, Tania A. Chavez Camacho, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I make this declaration based on my personal knowledge except where I have indicated otherwise. If called as a witness, I could and would testify competently and truthfully to what is contained in this declaration.

I. BACKGROUND

2. I am the Executive Director and President of La Unión del Pueblo Entero (“LUPE”). I have served LUPE in this capacity since January 2023. As Executive Director, I am responsible for the strategic direction of the organization, its financial viability, and ensuring that we respond to community needs. Prior to becoming the Executive Director of LUPE, I held various roles at the organization, ranging from organizing, fundraising, strategy, and coordinating special projects. I started working with the organization in 2012. I also earned my Masters in Business Administration and my Masters in Communication from the University of Texas-Pan American (currently the University of Texas at Rio Grande Valley).
3. Founded in 1989 by labor rights activists César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, LUPE is a community organization rooted in the belief that members of the low-income community have the responsibility and obligation to organize themselves. In 2003, LUPE was established in the Rio Grande Valley, based on a community organizing model to advance the objectives of low-income communities.
4. LUPE envisions a border region where people of all races, genders, ages, and backgrounds can thrive, live with dignity, and achieve liberation. LUPE builds *pueblo* power by developing community leaders through membership and multi-issue grassroots organizing

led by our roughly 8,000 members who harness the power of our membership to achieve social justice.

II. MEMBERSHIP

5. LUPE is a membership organization. Our membership, and the responsibility that comes with it, form the base that is the power of our organization. We have roughly 8,000 members across Texas and the United States. Many of our members do not have immigration status in the United States. Our membership ranges in age from high school students to senior citizens.
6. LUPE has two membership tiers, general membership and solidarity membership. General membership costs \$50 per year, with discounts for students, seniors, and married couples. General members have access to free or low-cost community services, invitation to LUPE events, and communications about participation in LUPE organizing and advocacy. General members also receive a member ID. Community members enroll in general membership by visiting one of LUPE's four offices. Solidarity membership grants people invitation to LUPE events and communications about participation in LUPE organizing and advocacy, but does not give them access to free or low-cost community services. People can sign up for solidarity membership online for \$5 per month.
7. The community services that LUPE members have access to include: income tax services, immigration services, translation of official documents, notary services, interventions with local law enforcement, assisting in the transferring of auto titles, workers' rights advocacy, free citizenship classes, free basic English classes, free accidental death insurance, and so much more. LUPE services also include college readiness and access resources, as well as adult education classes.

8. LUPE members participate in the selection of the organization's leadership. For instance, at some of the general member meetings, which occur the first Friday of every month, members may vote on recommendations for board seats. That recommendation goes to the board, where the board then votes on it. Board members serve a one-year term and may get reappointed every year.
9. LUPE is also community-focused in its hiring. For instance, when we hire, we prioritize hiring LUPE members who are part of our communities. Many staff members have been hired from our membership base.
10. LUPE's mission and activities are strongly influenced by our members, and we rely on our members to engage with the community and carry out our mission. Every two years, the organization undertakes a process to gather membership input and vote on priorities for the coming years.
11. Every year, LUPE holds *juntas caseras*, or house meetings, where members in particular neighborhoods meet and identify the most critical issues that impact their lives. In 2024, the organization held over five hundred *juntas caseras*. LUPE organizers compile the lists of community needs created during the *juntas caseras* and identify the top issues across the entire membership.
12. Then, every two years, LUPE members begin the process of voting on top priorities that guide LUPE's organizational activities. In 2024, for instance, LUPE held twenty focus groups with one hundred and twenty LUPE members. After these focus groups vote, members then meet at a large gathering, the *Cumbre de Miembros*, or Member Summit (formerly called the *Cumbre de Colonias*). At this meeting, top issues are turned into resolutions and formally passed. These resolutions steer the priorities and activities of the

organization for the following two years. This process, which includes the *Cumbre*, is held every two years.

III. EDUCATION ACCESS WORK

13. Education Access is a LUPE priority and is a crucial part of our mission to improve the well-being of low-income communities. We have a vision of building a better future, and we recognize that one way to carry out our mission is through higher-education access for our communities. During the large *Cumbre* gathering, members have specifically identified the need for improving and supporting education access for noncitizens, especially in the Rio Grande Valley.
14. One main service LUPE provides is helping low-income and undocumented students and students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (“DACA”) status access higher education. A major component of this work is providing information regarding eligibility for in-state tuition under the law known as the Texas Dream Act.
15. Since its inception in the Rio Grande Valley, LUPE has provided college readiness education, including giving presentations at local high schools. In recent years, about two-three LUPE staff members have given trainings and presentations at least two-three times a week from the end of August through February, depending on student aid application deadlines. These presentations are for local high school counselors, students, and parents to ensure as many high school students as possible, especially those that are noncitizens, have the information they need to access higher education. This information includes the cost of tuition and eligibility requirements to obtain in-state tuition. Over the years, these presentations have reached thousands and thousands of students.

16. Around 2020, LUPE created a program called ¡*Al Colegio Si Se Puede!*. Under the program, LUPE staff provided consultations for an annual cohort of undocumented members who wanted to attend college. This program specifically aimed to provide one-on-one support and advice for students seeking to attend college. The cohort program ran through 2024, and at least eighty to one hundred students have been a part of these cohorts throughout the years.

17. Because LUPE recognized the need for extensive written materials to educate the community about college access for undocumented students, LUPE paused its cohort program under ¡*Al Colegio Si Se Puede!* to focus on developing a Dreamer education guide. The 2024 version of the ¡*Al Colegio Si Se Puede!* Undocumented Student Guide is a fifty-six-page handbook that one LUPE staff member worked on full-time for approximately six months. This handbook includes seven chapters, appendices, and additional student resources. The handbook explains eligibility for in-state tuition under the Texas Dream Act and walks students through the practical steps involved with applying for in-state tuition as an undocumented student using the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (“TAFSA”). The handbook also covers navigating the college process more generally, including how to use the online college application and what questions about citizenship and Texas residency are asked. The guide even includes a personal testimony about the positive impact of higher education on an undocumented student. In 2024, LUPE printed about a thousand copies of the guide to distribute in local schools, primarily high schools in the Rio Grande Valley.

IV. THE END OF THE TEXAS DREAM ACT: IMPACT ON LUPE AND ITS MEMEBERS

18. The abrupt and apparent end of the Texas Dream Act has completely upended our educational access work and put additional organizational strain and focus on that work.

We had planned to update the ¡*Al Colegio Si Se Puede!* Undocumented Student Guide for the 2025 college application season, building on prior versions of the guide that we dedicated significant staff time and resources to developing. However, with the recent end of the Texas Dream Act, our organization will now need to use additional resources to develop new resources to ensure that students have the most up-to-date and accurate information about accessing higher education. Moreover, LUPE also has a team of eight organizers that it trained in November 2024 to provide college access presentations. These organizers were trained based on the Undocumented Student Guide. Now, much of their training is obsolete, and we will have to invest time and resources into re-training our organizers to ensure community members get the most accurate information about how the end of the Texas Dream Act will impact their college journey.

19. To help spread information about accessing higher education, LUPE also runs the LUPE_Youth social media accounts aimed at providing information to community members under age twenty-five. The account regularly posts information about the process for undocumented students to access college, including deadlines for the TAFSA. We are now expending resources to ensure that our social media account provides the most up-to-date information about accessing higher education, especially after the apparent end of the Texas Dream Act.

20. To administer the ¡*Al Colegio Si Se Puede!* Program, LUPE established a staff position called the Education Equity Specialist. The Education Equity Specialist is responsible for coordinating, developing, and implementing youth and college access programs. The Education Equity Specialist creates curriculum and materials for the program, including

the Undocumented Student Guide, and is responsible for fostering effective communication with students and parents.

21. Our previous Education Equity Specialist transferred to another department within LUPE earlier this year. We intended to fill the position, but the Order and Final Judgment that appears to have ended in-state tuition for many of our community members has led us to reconsider. Helping immigrant and undocumented students access in-state tuition through the Texas Dream Act was a key function of the position, and we are now worried that this position's purpose will be completely frustrated. However, we recognize that without a dedicated staff member for education access, we will be less able to produce resources and support students in our communities that will still desperately want to attend college.
22. Since the Order and Final Judgment was issued, LUPE staff has devoted extra resources to helping our members and communities. I have personally spent several hours each day communicating with partners and coordinating with volunteers in response to ensure our members understand the current state of the law. I have also communicated with officials to better understand how the change in law will be implemented. Two of our other staff members have devoted similar time to the effort, as undocumented members are anxious and scared about what this means for their ability to go to college.
23. Additionally, LUPE has made it a priority to reassure our members and provide the most up-to-date and accurate information about the impact of ending the Texas Dream Act. Specifically, we have dedicated resources to organizing an advocacy response to defend the Texas Dream Act, including a social media response to keep students informed with updates, digital actions, and supportive programming.

24. LUPE has already devoted significant additional resources to our education access programs in the wake of the Order and Final Judgment, and we will continue to re-examine existing programs in light of the dramatic policy changes caused by the decision. For instance, on June 11, 2025, we hosted a virtual community townhall about the Texas Dream Act to answer questions from our members and the community at large about the apparent end of the Act. Regardless of whether our Education Equity Specialist position continues, the end of the Texas Dream Act significantly harms our mission. We were established to support and lift up low-income communities.
25. Additionally, LUPE also has undocumented members currently in college, and they are desperate to know how the Order and Final Judgment will be implemented. They want to stay enrolled and continue their education, but they are uncertain if they will be able to do so if they are charged out of state tuition.
26. Last week alone, I spoke with about six members that are impacted by this decision and are anxious and uncertain about their college futures.
27. Our members that are currently enrolled students are unaware of how to proceed because their local institutions have not provided them instructions or notice about how this will be implemented. However, these members know they will not be able to afford out-of-state tuition. These members are hitting pause on their plans, as they will be unable to afford the new financial rates.
28. As an organization, it is difficult to respond to community and member needs when neither the state nor universities that we know of—as of the date of this Declaration—have provided meaningful guidance on how the Order and Final Judgment will be implemented.

29. The Order and Final Judgment has frustrated our mission of helping undocumented students access higher education in Texas and has directly harmed our members.

Tania A Chavez Camacho

Tania A. Chavez Camacho
Executive Director and President
La Unión del Pueblo Entero

Executed this 21st day of June 2025 in 2025, Texas

EXHIBIT 12



June 04, 2025 | Press Release

Attorney General Ken Paxton Successfully Strikes Down Unconstitutional Law that Gave In-State Tuition to Illegal Aliens

After filing a joint motion with the U.S. Department of Justice in federal court, Attorney General Ken Paxton successfully stopped a law that unconstitutionally provided in-state tuition to illegal aliens.

“Today, I entered a joint motion along with the Trump Administration opposing a law that unconstitutionally and unlawfully gave benefits to illegal aliens that were not available to American citizens,” said Attorney General Paxton. “Ending this discriminatory and un-American provision is a major victory for Texas.”

Attorney General Paxton’s legal filing asked the court to rule that the law favoring illegal aliens was unconstitutional, explaining that “[i]n direct and express conflict with federal law, Texas education law specifically allows an alien who is not lawfully present in the United States to qualify for in-state tuition based on residence within the state, while explicitly denying resident-based tuition rates to U.S. citizens that do not qualify as Texas residents.” The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas agreed and entered a final judgment declaring the law unconstitutional and issuing a permanent injunction against its application.

To read the motion, [click here](#).

[\(/sites/default/files/images/press/Joint%20Motion%20for%20Entry%20of%20Consent%20Judgment.r](/sites/default/files/images/press/Joint%20Motion%20for%20Entry%20of%20Consent%20Judgment.r)

To read the final judgment, [click here](#).

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[Back to Top](#)

EXHIBIT 13

Undocumented students rethink their college dreams after Texas cuts their access to cheaper tuition

Thousands of undocumented students who grew up in Texas now face college tuition costs that are more than twice what other state residents pay.

BY **JESSICA PRIEST** JUNE 14, 2025 5 AM CENTRAL

SHARE

Sign up for [The Brief](#), The Texas Tribune's daily newsletter that keeps readers up to speed on the most essential Texas news.

Even though Jorge and his younger sister are only two years apart in age, their college experiences are headed in different directions.

They were both motivated and highly engaged high school students in Central Texas. But after graduation, he went to Austin Community College and had to work three jobs to pay for tuition. She enrolled at Texas State University on a full scholarship.

It wasn't academics or ambition that separated the siblings, but their immigration status. Their parents, seeking economic opportunity, crossed the U.S.-Mexico border with Jorge in their arms when he was 1 year old. They had his sister in Austin a short time later.

This fall, Jorge hoped to finally be on equal footing with her. The 21-year-old had saved enough money to afford tuition at Texas State and had applied to transfer there to study mechanical engineering. His plans depended on having access to in-state tuition, the lower rate that Texas residents pay to attend public colleges and is often half, or even a third, of what out-of-state students are charged.

But the siblings' path may soon split for good. Last week, state officials agreed to the federal government's demand to stop offering in-state tuition rates to undocumented students living in Texas.

Jorge is one of thousands of students whose education plans may have been truncated by the ruling. Their aspirations — to become engineers or lawyers, or join other professions — haven't disappeared. But the road has grown steeper. For some, it may now be out of reach.

The Texas Tribune spoke to four students who were brought into the country when they were young and are weighing what last week’s ruling means for their college plans. They requested anonymity out of fear that being identified publicly could make them or their families a target for deportation.

The students said they had been on high alert for months, fearing that the Texas Dream Act — the 2001 law that allowed undocumented students to qualify for in-state tuition and state financial aid — would be repealed this year as anti-immigrant rhetoric soared with the start of a new Trump administration.

Federal officials have set a goal of deporting 1 million undocumented immigrants by the end of this year, and perhaps no state has extended them as much help as Texas. Gov. [Greg Abbott](#) said the National Guard can now [make immigration arrests](#). State lawmakers have [authorized spending billions of dollars](#) from the state’s budget on border security and passed a law this year [requiring sheriffs](#) to work with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. And a proposal to end the Texas Dream Act [advanced further](#) in the Texas Legislature than it had in a decade.

“This one got further along than I was comfortable with, so I was keeping my eye on it,” Jorge said.

The students were relieved when lawmakers ended this year’s legislative session without repealing the law, but it was short-lived. They hadn’t prepared for the federal government and state officials to turn to the courts to dismantle the long-standing policy.

Schools, many of which had already started summer classes, were also caught off guard and have struggled to answer critical questions: What will happen to students who can’t pay the difference in tuition? Will they be left with debt and no degree?

Students have been trying to find their own answers, with little luck. College access advocates and legal experts say they are still trying to gauge the ruling’s implications and whether it can be challenged.

Soon after the court announced its decision, Jorge’s friends texted him a news article about it.

“I was shocked,” he said. “I stayed up until 3 in the morning just reading everything I could.”

From dream to disappointment

For nearly 24 years, the Texas Dream Act made college more affordable for students like Jorge.

The law extended access to in-state tuition rates to university and college students who are not U.S. citizens but have lived in Texas for three years prior to graduating high school and one year prior to enrolling in college. The law required them to sign an affidavit declaring that they would apply for permanent legal residency as soon as they were able.

About 19,500 students signed an affidavit to qualify for in-state tuition in 2023. That number not only includes students living illegally in the country but also those who are here on visas, such as those whose parents received work permits and reside legally in the U.S. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, which tracks the number of affidavit signers, has told lawmakers the agency does not ask students to disclose their immigration status.

Affidavit signers are also eligible to receive state financial aid. Texas GOP senators have expressed concern that those students take an outsized portion of the state aid available, but according to Every Texan, a left-leaning policy research institute, that's not the case. Affidavit signers received \$17.3 million of the \$635.2 million — less than 3% — of the aid distributed in 2023, the group found.

The law was not controversial when it was passed. It was seen, even by Republican leaders at the time, as a common-sense way to boost the economy. Undocumented students contribute more than \$80 million annually to the Texas higher education system and fill vacancies in critical sectors like health care, education and technology, according to the American Immigration Council.

But the Tea Party movement and President Donald Trump have pushed the Republican Party, in Texas and across the country, toward a more nativist stance.

In 2021, Abbott launched a billion-dollar border security initiative called Operation Lone Star. As part of that effort, he increased the penalty for the state crime of trespassing and directed state troopers to arrest migrants found on private property. Abbott deployed thousands of Texas National Guard members across the state this week to respond to protests against federal deportation raids, which his office says have devolved into lawlessness in cities like Los Angeles.

Republicans now argue the Texas Dream Act amounted to a subsidy that deprived U.S. citizens of opportunities. Texans for Strong Borders, an influential anti-immigration group, said the law encouraged people to immigrate to the country illegally.

Last week, the U.S. Department of Justice sued Texas, arguing the Texas Dream Act “unconstitutionally discriminates against U.S. citizens.” Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, a long-time critic of the law, chose not to defend it in court despite his history of suing past

presidential administrations for overstepping their authority and infringing on the state's rights. A federal judge favored by conservative litigants quickly ruled in favor of the Justice Department and declared the law unconstitutional.

Republicans quickly celebrated the Texas Dream Act's demise. State Sen. [Brandon Creighton](#), the chair of the Texas Senate's education committee and the architect of the state's diversity, equity and inclusion ban and other sweeping higher education reforms, [pointed out on social media](#) that he had filed legislation to end in-state tuition for undocumented students multiple times in previous sessions.

"This is a long-overdue win for the rule of law, fiscal responsibility, and Texas taxpayers," the Conroe Republican said.

[Critics accused the feds and the state of colluding](#) to eliminate the policy without giving undocumented students and their supporters a chance to push back. The federal government's argument that undocumented students are receiving benefits denied to U.S. citizens is false and misleading, said Monica Andrade, an attorney and director of state policy and legal strategy at the Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration.

"In fact, any U.S. citizen who meets the same criteria — such as attending and graduating from a Texas high school — qualifies for in-state tuition. These requirements apply regardless of immigration status," she said.

For Jorge, the political fights over immigration have always cast a shadow over his college dreams.

He wants work for Engineers Without Borders, a humanitarian organization that helps establish clean water, sanitation and infrastructure in developing countries.

His parents taught him that "everything that we do has to be for the betterment of the world, because it's simply what we as humans owe one another," he said. "The idea of not using education to try to improve the world in some way seems a bit, I don't know, backwards."

Jorge has paid for school himself, starting out working for his father's construction company before taking additional jobs as a waiter and a cashier. His schooling has taken longer than usual because sometimes he couldn't afford to attend full time, even with access to in-state tuition.

"I take pride in the fact that my parents don't have to worry about me being short on bills for school," he said, "but when it comes to rent and bills, I am definitely still dependent on my family."

Jorge said he applied to Texas State not because his sister goes there, but because it was affordable. He could keep costs down by continuing to live with his family and commuting to San Marcos for class.

Without access to in-state tuition rates, he said, Texas State is anything but cheap. According to the university's website, taking 15 hours in the fall would now cost him an estimated \$24,520 in tuition and fees. That's double what he would have to pay with in-state tuition.

Jorge still hopes the judge's ruling can be overturned. A group of undocumented students took the first steps in that direction this week by asking the judge to let them intervene in the case. But legal experts say an appeal is a long shot that will likely take months to resolve.

In the meantime, Jorge has already started looking into whether he can finish his degree at a Mexican university online.

"I'd like to give more back to this country, but if that's the option in front of me, I can't say I wouldn't take it," he said.

Other undocumented students, even those who have received state financial aid or private scholarships, have also started looking for backup plans.

A.L., a 26-year-old student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio, is racing to finish her psychology degree. She enrolled in as many classes as possible this summer and fall because she was worried the Legislature would repeal the Texas Dream Act.

"A lot of us were already nervous, because we kind of feared that this was going to happen, but we just didn't think it would happen so soon," she said.

TheDream.US, a national organization that awards scholarships to undocumented students going to college, provides roughly \$4,000 to A.L. each semester. But she'd be at least \$6,000 short if required to pay the out-of-state tuition rate. After the court's decision, she wondered if she would have to withdraw from her classes for now.

Some students said they felt betrayed.

A.M., a 24-year-old recent Texas A&M University graduate, said he wanted to return to the school to pursue a master's degree in public service and administration, but paying out-of-state tuition would be too costly for him. He is also reassessing his options.

A.M. lamented that Paxton didn't defend the state law in court, especially after lawmakers declined to repeal it during this year's legislative session.

“It provides a lot of undocumented students with opportunities to fill labor shortages here in this state,” he said. “And yet, Paxton kind of turned his back on us, on all of us Texans.”

Colleges face questions

Days after the ruling upended Texas’ tuition policy, state officials and universities still can’t say what happens next, leaving students without much guidance on how to move forward.

Fifteen Democrat state representatives wrote to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board last week asking it to create a first-generation resident tuition rate to allow students who benefited from the Texas Dreamer Act to enroll this fall at a more affordable rate.

“This action would not override statute but would provide a critical bridge until the Legislature can return to address the matter,” reads the letter, which state Rep. Donna Howard, D-Austin, posted on social media.

Friday evening, the agency replied that it does not have the authority to do what the lawmakers proposed.

The Tribune reached out to the nine Texas public universities and colleges with the highest enrollment of affidavit signers and asked them if they would charge those students the higher rate immediately; if students who had already paid in-state tuition rates for summer classes would have to pay the difference; or if students would have any recourse to challenge the higher costs. The University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas at Arlington, the Dallas College District and Houston Community College did not respond.

It’s unclear if any Texas university knows which of their students are undocumented or how they will determine who should now be charged the out-of-state tuition rate. The University of Houston System said it does not require applicants to disclose their immigration status. Other schools — including Texas A&M University, Lone Star College, the University of Texas at Dallas and UT-Rio Grande Valley — did not answer when asked if they do. They said they were still trying to understand the ruling and what it means for their students.

UT-RGV officials acknowledged the ruling’s likely impact on students’ financial plans.

“Our priority and focus are on minimizing disruption to student success consistent with applicable law and helping students navigate this transition with clarity and care,” said Melissa Vasquez, a university spokesperson, in a statement.

College access experts worry colleges could start identifying undocumented students to cut off their access to in-state tuition rates, which could expose them to immigration enforcement.

In addition, they said, the ruling could set the state back on its goal of having 60% of Texans between the ages of 25-34 hold a certificate or degree by 2030. As of 2021, only 49% of Texans in that age group had done so, according to the most recent data from the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

“We are hopeful that colleges will do what they can to help students complete the path they started,” said Will Davies, director of policy and research at Breakthrough Central Texas, a nonprofit dedicated to helping students from low-income communities become the first in their family to go to college. “I mean, that’s good for all Texans. No one benefits from forcing students to stop out with existing debt and without the credentials that can help them achieve economic stability.”

Ale, 24, worked hard to graduate from the University of North Texas with a degree in political science, knowing her efforts might not pay off.

She has work authorization and a driver’s license via the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which was created under the Obama administration and shields some undocumented immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children from deportation. DACA, which is also facing legal challenges, allowed Ale to split her week working four days as a hotel manager and attending classes at the University of North Texas in her remaining time. One semester, she and her parents worked extra hours so she could afford to be an unpaid intern for a politician.

Now, Ale works for a law firm in North Texas that assists international students who, like her, don’t know if they will be able to finish their education in the U.S. She wanted to apply to UT-Austin’s law school before she learned last week that the Texas Dream Act was no more.

She said she’s trying to channel the sadness she feels about her situation into motivating her younger sisters, who are U.S. citizens, to never take their educational opportunities for granted. And she still plans to take the LSAT.

“I’m not going to give up on myself,” she said.

Ale isn’t alone in that resolve.

Jorge said he’s going to study Mexican history so he can prepare for the entrance exam at two Mexican universities, Tecnológico de Monterrey and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, where he’s considering finishing his degree online.

A.M., who wants to use his education to help reform the country’s health care system, is looking into moving to one of the 23 states that do offer undocumented students in-state

tuition rates and paying for his master's degree there. He feels sad and scared about the possibility of having to move away from his family and friends.

"It's kind of like having to start from scratch, and all the connections I made here, I might not be able to see for a while," he said.

A.L. felt hopeful she'll be able to finish her degree after TheDream.US told her this week she will continue to receive support, even if she decides to transfer to another university.

"I'm still a bit anxious, but at the same time positive because there are people out there who support us," she said.

All four said they are still trying to reconcile what it means to be raised in Texas and yet be told, in rhetoric and increasingly through law, that they don't belong.

María Méndez contributed to this story.

The Texas Tribune partners with Open Campus on higher education coverage.

Disclosure: Every Texan, Houston Community College, Lone Star College, Texas A&M University, University of Texas - Arlington, University of Texas - Dallas, University of Texas at Austin, University of Houston and University of North Texas have been financial supporters of The Texas Tribune, a nonprofit, nonpartisan news organization that is funded in part by donations from members, foundations and corporate sponsors. Financial supporters play no role in the Tribune's journalism. Find a complete [list of them here](#).

Big news: 20 more speakers join the TribFest lineup! New additions include **Margaret Spellings**, former U.S. secretary of education and CEO of the Bipartisan Policy Center; **Michael Curry**, former presiding bishop and primate of The Episcopal Church; **Beto O'Rourke**, former U.S. Representative, D-El Paso; **Joe Lonsdale**, entrepreneur, founder and managing partner at 8VC; and **Katie Phang**, journalist and trial lawyer.

[Get tickets.](#)

TribFest 2025 is presented by JPMorganChase.

T [Learn about The Texas Tribune's policies, including our partnership with The Trust Project to increase transparency in news.](#)

EXHIBIT 14



PRESS RELEASE

The Justice Department, Texas Reach Agreement to End In-State Tuition for Illegal Aliens

Thursday, June 5, 2025

For Immediate Release

Office of Public Affairs

Agreement comes hours after Justice Department filed complaint challenging two decades-old laws

WASHINGTON – U.S. Attorney General Pamela Bondi and Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton released the following statements after a federal judge formally enjoined Texas from providing in-state tuition for illegal aliens.

"The Justice Department commends Texas leadership and AG Ken Paxton for swiftly working with us to halt a program that was treating Americans like second-class citizens in their own country," said Attorney General Pamela Bondi. "Other states should take note that we will continue filing affirmative litigation to remedy unconstitutional state laws that discriminate against American citizens."

"I'm proud to stand with Attorney General Bondi and the Trump Administration to stop an unconstitutional and un-American law that gave in-state tuition to illegal aliens," said Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. "This law was an insult to our nation's citizens and has now been rightly stopped from being enforced. I will continue to fight for the American people and work swiftly to defeat any policy that puts illegal aliens ahead of our own citizens."

The motion came just hours after the Department filed a complaint in the Northern District of Texas seeking to enjoin enforcement of Texas laws that required colleges and universities to provide in-state tuition rates for all aliens who maintain Texas residency, regardless of their legal status. Federal law prohibits institutions of higher education from providing benefits to aliens that are not offered to U.S. citizens. The Texas laws were in direct conflict of federal law and the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

Updated June 5, 2025

Topic

IMMIGRATION

Component

[Office of the Attorney General](#)

Press Release Number: 25-582

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The Justice Department Files Complaint Challenging Kentucky Regulation Providing Reduced In-State Tuition for Illegal Aliens

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June 17, 2025

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June 12, 2025



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EXHIBIT 15

DECLARATION OF OSCAR SILVA

I, Oscar Silva, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I make this declaration based on my personal knowledge except where I have indicated otherwise. If called as a witness, I could and would testify competently and truthfully to the statements in this declaration.
2. I am 24 years old. I have lived in Texas since 2001, just after my first birthday. I currently reside in Denton, Texas and have lived here since 2019. I grew up and attended elementary school, middle school, and high school in Garland, Texas.
3. I am a student enrolled at the University of North Texas ("UNT"). I am in a joint Bachelor's and Master's program, expecting to graduate in Spring 2026 with a B.S. in Economics and a B.S. and M.S. in Accounting.
4. When I was a student at Lakeview Centennial High School, I was involved with the National Honor Society. I completed over 100 hours of community service before I enrolled in college.
5. I have been eligible to receive in-state tuition since 2019, after completing the process to satisfy all the eligibility criteria.
6. Part of the balance of my in-state tuition has been paid with several one-time academic merit-based scholarships awarded for a fixed amount, from my university and external organizations.
7. I received UNT's Melton-Cochran Scholarship in 2021, due to my academic success in the Economics Department. In 2022, I received UNT's Lewis M. Abernathy Scholarship, which was also merit-based.
8. However, these scholarships did not cover the full cost of my in-state tuition. After applying merit-based scholarships towards my in-state tuition rates, my wife and I pay the

rest of the balance out of pocket. I currently support myself through my wife's full-time teaching job and her supplemental summer seasonal job.

9. I anticipate being able to continue my education contingent on my continued eligibility for in-state tuition. If I am no longer eligible for in-state tuition for the remaining year of my degree, it will cause extreme financial duress to my household and likely result in my withdrawal from UNT because of the cost.
10. At the time that I make this statement, it is my understanding that I still qualify for in-state tuition rates. However, I am afraid that the consent order in this case will obligate UNT to reassess my status, and I will be forced to pay higher rates.
11. Since the Order and Final Judgment regarding the Texas Dream Act, I have not received any notifications from my university about how this will impact me. This has left me in a state of uncertainty, both for the Fall and Spring semesters.
12. I have already enrolled in the Fall semester and chosen my classes for Fall, and I still have an outstanding tuition balance. The deadline to pay for the Fall semester tuition is on August 14, 2025.
13. My family and I intend to stay in Texas after I graduate from UNT. I look forward to applying my degrees to the work I have trained for, and supporting myself and my family as we continue to build our life together in our Texas community.
14. If I am ineligible to receive in-state tuition for the remaining two semesters of my education, I will not be able to finish my degree. My household cannot afford to pay out-of-state tuition rates.
15. I have been in school since 2019, and I have invested countless hours and significant financial resources into my education. To give up the opportunity of graduating with three

degrees will hinder my future life and career plans. I have over 200 credit hours at this point, as I have been committed to completing my higher education for years.

Oscar Silva

Oscar Silva

Executed this 23rd day of June 2025 in Denton, Texas

EXHIBIT 16

DECLARATION OF RUSSELL LOWERY-HART, PhD
CHANCELLOR, AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

1. My name is Russell Lowery-Hart, and I am the Chancellor at Austin Community College District (“ACC”). I have personal knowledge of the facts stated herein because in my role at ACC, I must be familiar with our revenues, the role of tuition in our revenues, the types of students we enroll, the approximate volume of students affected by the final judgment described below, how our students make enrollment decisions, the affordability of our tuition, and our impact as an educational institution in our community, among many other things. If called as a witness, I could and would testify competently thereto.

2. ACC is a nationally recognized public institution of higher education serving the Austin, Texas metropolitan area and surrounding Central Texas communities. ACC is one of the largest community college systems in the United States, enrolling approximately 40,000 credit students each semester and serving more than 70,000 students annually through academic, continuing education, and adult education programs. The College operates multiple campuses and centers across Central Texas, offering more than 100 programs in ten areas of study, including associate degrees, career and technical certificates, and select bachelor’s degrees. ACC’s mission is to provide open access to high-quality education and training, support student success, and serve as a catalyst for economic development and community enrichment. As an Achieving the Dream Leader College of Distinction and a Hispanic Serving Institution, ACC is committed to ensuring equitable access and success for all students, including those from historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

3. ACC’s funding is derived from a combination of sources, including state appropriations, local property tax revenues from its taxing district, federal and state grants, and tuition and fee payments from enrolled students. Tuition revenue constitutes a significant portion of ACC’s operating budget and is essential for supporting the College’s instructional programs, student services, campus maintenance, and day-to-day operations. The loss of tuition payments from a substantial number of students—such as those affected by the final judgment—would have an immediate and direct impact on ACC’s finances. Community colleges like ACC operate on lean budgets and rely heavily on predictable tuition income to maintain affordable access, quality instruction, and comprehensive support services for all students. Any reduction in tuition revenue—and particularly an anticipated reduction the full extent of which is difficult to predict—threatens the College’s ability to fulfill its mission and to continue providing affordable, high-quality education to the Central Texas community.

4. ACC learned that on June 4, 2025, the United States District Court, Northern District of Texas, Wichita Falls Division, entered a final judgment enjoining enforcement of the Texas Dream Act (the “Final Judgment”), which had, since 2001, allowed certain non-citizen

students, including undocumented students, to qualify for in-state tuition at Texas public colleges and universities, including ACC (which I refer to as “Affected Students”). Based on the applications to Texas state financial aid and through the work of its counselors and admissions office, it is my understanding that ACC has currently enrolled approximately 440 Affected Students. As a result of the Court’s Final Judgment, ACC is now required to reclassify approximately 440 currently enrolled students—who previously qualified for in-state tuition under the Texas Dream Act—as out-of-state or international students, subjecting them to significantly higher tuition rates effective immediately.

5. ACC is asking the Court to vacate or alter its Final Judgment because the Final Judgment has a number of serious and immediate implications for the ongoing operations of ACC.

- a. **Reclassification and Enrollment Effect:** The sudden reclassification of these students will have a direct and immediate negative impact on ACC’s enrollment and retention rates. The Affected Students, many if not most of whom in our experience come from low-income backgrounds and lack access to federal financial aid, will face tuition increases that, based on data from recent years, could be over four times their current rates. For example, at ACC, in-district tuition for 12 credit hours is approximately \$1,020, while out-of-state or international tuition for the same course load is \$4,236. This abrupt increase is unaffordable for the vast majority of these students. In decades of experience managing ACC’s budget, we can think of nothing remotely similar to this sort of overnight policy change, making any predictions about the impact challenging. But we anticipate that a significant portion of these 440 students will be forced to withdraw from ACC, either immediately or at the end of the current term, due to their inability to pay the new tuition rates.
- b. **Deterrence of Prospective Students.** ACC has decades of experience communicating with students about their college decisions, as well as studying the potential market of college-ready students who could enroll at ACC. As a result, we are intimately familiar with college-related decisions. The loss of in-state tuition eligibility will deter future applicants who would have otherwise considered ACC. Prospective students who are undocumented or from mixed-status families will be discouraged from applying or enrolling, knowing they will be charged out-of-state rates that are unaffordable for most. This chilling effect will reduce the pool of qualified applicants, particularly from Texas high schools.
- c. **Revenue Loss.** The withdrawal of a cohort of students will result in a loss of tuition revenue for ACC. At ACC, the loss of up to 440 students could result in a direct loss of several hundred thousand dollars in tuition and associated fees

annually, plus a similar amount of state appropriations. Any loss of revenue has the potential to impact ACC's academic programs, student support services, and campus operations. What is particularly harmful is the abrupt nature of this policy change, leaving ACC with no time to adequately study and prepare to address its effects.

- d. **Administrative Burdens and Costs.** It is unclear whether the Final Judgment requires ACC, in order to ensure it is not "enforcing" the Texas Dream Act, to develop and implement new systems to identify, track, and reclassify affected students, as the Texas Dream Act did not require institutions to track students' immigration status. If the Final Judgment requires such tracking—or if the Attorney General of Texas interprets it to require such tracking—then ACC may need to create new administrative processes to determine which students are no longer eligible for in-state tuition, notify them, recalculate their tuition bills, and manage appeals or requests for reconsideration. This will require significant staff time, training, and resources, diverting attention from other critical institutional priorities, while at the same time depriving ACC from critical revenue through falling enrollment.
- e. **Impact on Marketing, Recruitment, and Public Relations.** The abrupt change in tuition policy undermines ACC's longstanding efforts to market itself as an accessible, inclusive, and affordable institution for all Texas high school graduates. The negative publicity and uncertainty surrounding the status of undocumented students will harm ACC's reputation in the community, making it more difficult to recruit and retain students from underrepresented backgrounds. ACC's outreach and marketing materials will need to be revised, and staff will need to be retrained to provide accurate information to prospective students and families.
- f. **Scholarships and Fundraising.** Many scholarships and private fundraising efforts at ACC are targeted toward students who are first-generation, low-income, or from immigrant backgrounds. The loss of in-state tuition eligibility for undocumented students will increase demand for institutional and private scholarships, straining limited resources and potentially reducing the number of students who can be supported.

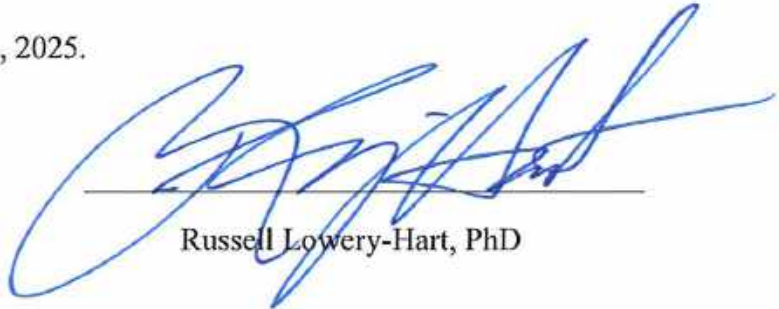
6. The loss of any single student can impact their educational community; the loss of as many as 440 at one time even more so. I believe that the loss of these students will have a cascading effect on campus life, academic programs, and student support services, which rely on stable enrollment and varied student experiences and backgrounds to function effectively. The

withdrawal of a large cohort of students will undermine ACC's mission of serving all Texans, and negatively impact the local workforce and economy. Economic analyses suggest that rescinding in-state tuition for undocumented students could cost Texas more than \$460 million annually in lost wages and spending power, with a direct impact on local communities served by ACC.

7. In sum, the final judgment enjoining enforcement of the Texas Dream Act is causing, and will continue to cause, immediate harm to ACC that is difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. The College faces imminent losses in enrollment, tuition revenue, and campus diversity; increased administrative burdens and costs; and damage to its reputation and ability to fulfill its educational mission.

I declare under penalty of perjury.

Executed in Travis County on June 24, 2025.



Russell Lowery-Hart, PhD